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BY SRI MAYURAM DHARMAJNA

M. RAMANATHA DEEKSHITHAR

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ACHARA MURAI

(Code of Good Conduct and Virtuous (GOOD) Practices)

2479

BY

Mayuram Dharmagna Viday Vachaspathi

Brahmasri M. RAMANATHA DEEKSHITAR

Released on the occasion of
82nd Birth Anniversary of Sri Sankaracharya of
Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam.

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Srimad APPAYYA DIKSHITHAR

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Srimukam
Sri Kanchi Acharyal
Sri Shakatapuram Acharyal
Srirangam Andavan Swamigal
Dharmapura Adheenam
Nepal Raja Durbar
Foreword
His Excellency Governor of Tamil Nadu
Preface

1.	Good Conduct (Achara)	1
2.	Virtuous (Good) practices	1
3.	Early Rising	1
4.	Things to be sighted at dawn	2
5.	The calls of nature	3
6.	Purification	3
7.	Holy intake of water Achamana	3
8.	The occasion for the Achamana	4
9.	Cleaning the teeth	4
10.	Bathing	5
11.	The time for Bathing	5
12.	How to take the Holy bath	5
13.	Some kinds of bath	6

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14.	Secondary bath (Gauna)	7
15.	Wearing clothes	8
16.	Putting on sacred marks	8
17.	How to meditate	9
18.	Meditation (Japa) on the Holy names	9
19.	Tha Rosary	10
20.	Worship (Puja)	10
21.	The materials for Puja	12
22.	Offering of food as sacrament	14
23.	Worship of guests	15
24.	The daily meal	15
25.	Note worthy points during the meal time	16
26.	Certain things prohibited	17
27.	What to avoid	18
28.	After the meals	19
29.	Fasting	19
30.	Chewing betels	21
31.	Sleep	21
32.	Other rules of good conduct	22
33.	A few other rules of good conduct	22
34.	Purification of things and Utensils	23
35.	The authorities of Dharma	24
36.	The Dharma Sastras	25
37.	Suitable Dwelling place	26
38.	Some general rules of good conduct	26
39.	Giving of alms or charity (Danam)	27
40.	Agriculture	29
41.	Protecting the country	30
42.	King's Dharma	31
43.	Begetting children	33

Koviloor Digital Library

44.	Acts to be performed upon the birth of children	33
45.	Naming of child	34
46.	Beginning to learn the letters (Aksharabhyasam)	35
47.	Adoption of son	35
48.	Respecting Mother, Father and Guru	36
49.	Prathakshina Namaskara	36
50.	Duties of student	37
51.	Marriage	38
52.	Choosing the suitable bride	39
53.	Chastity of woman	40
54.	Duty of chaste woman	40
55.	Things she should avoid	41
56.	Monthly periods	42
57.	Woman surviving the husband	42
58.	Duties of Grahastha	43
59.	Personal qualities	43
60.	Other rules of conduct	44
61.	Place of performance of sraddha	44
62.	Shannavadhi sraddha	45
63.	Gaya Sraddha	45
64.	Pollution	46
65.	Festivals celebrated by Hindus or Hindu festivals	51
66.	Vasantha Navarathri	51
67.	Sri Rama Navami	52
68.	Vaisakam	52
69.	Akshaya Trithiyai	53
70.	Srimad Acharya Jayanthi	53
71.	Narasimha Jayanthi	53
72.	Mahalayam	56
73.	Navarathri	56

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74.	Deepavali	57
75.	Narakachaturdasi	58
76.	Yama Dwidiyai	58
77.	Uttana Dwadasi	59
78.	Karthigai Deepam	59
79.	Samba Shashti	60
80	Bhishmashtami	60
81.	Ashtakai	61
82.	Sivarathri	61
83.	Sankatahara Chaturthi	62
84	Ardhodaya Mahodaya Punyakalam	62
85.	Pathisanjivara Vratam	63
86.	Astrology	63
87.	Marriage	65
88.	Travel (Yatra)	65
89.	Good Omen (சகுனம்)	67
90.	Bad Omen (அப சகுனம்)	67
91	Auspicious time for Sowing	68
92.	Beginning to build on a site	68
93.	Trade	68
94.	Mantra Upadesa	69
95.	Panchakam	69
96	Raghukalam etc.	70
97.	Good Dreams	70
98.	Bad Dreams	70
99.	Lagnas	71
100.	Horai	71
101.	Navagriha Dasais (Periods)	72
102.	Ayurveda (Medical Science)	73
103.	General Rules	73
104.	Food	74

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श्री :

FROM SRI ACHARYA OF
KANCHI KAMAKOTI PEETA

Observance of duties ordained by the sastras is the basic method for attaining happiness in this life and in the ones that follow. Achara is an important part of Karmanushtana. "Achara prathamo dharmah" is the wise counsel of Sri Bhishmachirya.

To learn achara, we can resort to scriptures like the Vedas, smrithisara, puranas. Greatmen like Sri Vaidyanatha Dikshithar have studied them and carefully codified the rules of conduct contained in them. But it is not possible for all, particularly for those without a knowledge of Samskrit, to read their works and understand them.

This book on achara fulfils a long felt need arising out of the above mentioned difficulty. All that a person should do from waking to bed time, the duties of the state, those of women etc. are explained in easy Tamil prose. Relevant Sanskrit texts are quoted where necessary.

May the asthikas who know Tamil, understand the rules mentioned in this good book, follow them in life and attain the grace of God who is the embodiment of dharma.

(Camp) Jamshedpur
Ananda Adika Bhadra Paad
Bahuladwadasi.

Narayana Smrithi.

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Camp: SHAKATAPURAM MUTT,
Agastiyar Street, Tambaram, MADRAS - 45.

॥ श्री शकटपुरम् महासंस्थानम् ॥

मुद्रा

बदरी जगद्गुरु शंकराचार्यपीठम् -
बण्डि गडि - कौप्पा - मैसूर् ॥

अस्मदत्यन्तप्रियाभिमानिमायूरपुर्यभिजनानां श्रीमदप्पय्यदीक्षित वंश सुजातानां श्रीरामनाथ दीक्षितानां विषये श्रीनारायण स्मरण पूर्वकं विरचिताशिषस्समुल्लसन्तुतराम् ।

भवदीया सदाचारपद्धतिर्दृष्टाऽस्माभिः । " आचर प्रभवो धर्मः " " आचार हीनं न पुनन्ति वेदाः "धर्मो विश्वस्य जगतः प्रतिष्ठा " इत्यादि वाक्यैः धर्मानुष्ठान मावश्यकं भवति । शास्त्रज्ञैस्तावत् ग्रंथान् दृष्ट्वानुष्ठातुं शक्यते स्वो धर्मः । तदितरैस्तथा वर्तुं न शक्यते । अतस्तेषामप्युपकाराय भवति भवदीयग्रंथः । द्राविडभाषामयत्वाद्भारतीयानां सर्वेषां प्रातरुत्थानमारभ्य यावत्सुप्ति कर्तव्य धर्मः, यावदायुरवश्यानुष्ठेय कर्म च सम्यक् ज्ञातुमनुष्ठातुं चोपकरोति । समेषामास्तिकानां धर्मे विश्वासः, ईश्वर भक्तिश्चेतोपि वृद्धिमेत्विति आशास्महे ।

नारायणस्मृतयः
बदरी जगद्गुरु शंकरमठम्

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Sri Ranganatha Divyamani Padukabhyam Namaha:

Srirangam Srimath Andavan Periashramam

Camp: Bangalore - 4

Date: 5—2—1975

Mangalasasanam of Sri Ranganatha Divya Paduka Smarana Purvakam to Sri Ramanatha Srowthigal. Received your book on "Achara". Read it entirely. It is very satisfying. It contains all that a man must necessarily know.

Many people have the mistaken idea that achara is for the few vaidikas and not for their own selves. The vaidikas are even looked upon as a separate caste. The fact is that lowkikas are also vaidikas and vice versa.

Achara helps us not only to attain happiness in the other worlds, It is a means by which a healthy life can be led here and now. It is good to use the mango leaf to clean the teeth. In Ayurveda it is said that while cleaning the teeth the gums should not be damaged. Many use brushes, harm their gums and ultimately lose their teeth even at 35. They go in for false teeth. Those who clean their teeth as ordained by the shastras will have them strong even at 70. As soon as we get up in the morning after sleep we are expected to sip water thrice (achamana). At night we breathe continuously for hours and hence the tongue dries up. When we sip water it soothes the tongue and improves the pulse. If this is done regularly asthma can be avoided. The use of

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Panchakavya helps us to avoid T. B. The mantra that is to be uttered at the time of taking Panchakavya reveals this fact. In this way the injunctions of Shastras like bath and sandhyavandhana aim at building a healthy body.

It is unfortunate that these old and good customs are sometimes poohpoohed. We are courting diseases and difficulties because we have thrown the shastraic injunctions to the winds.

This book on achara can be used by all. It explains all that a man has to do from morning to bed time, during each month and the significance of the various vratas and festivals.

Daiiy duties, special duties. charity, things that can be eaten, things that are taboo, vratas, festivals, rules governing worship, things that are conducive to a happy household life, Japa, fasting, chastity, reverence to guru etc. are dealt with in an easy and clear style. One who possesses a copy of this book has with him all that he should know. If he puts them into practice he will attain what is worthy. So this book must reach all places far and near and people must benefit by it. The author is a man of virtues. He is a pandit in Samaveda, Suthrabashyam Dharmashastras and Srowtham. We pray to Sri Ranganatha and Sri Ranganachiar that he should live long, writing many more books of this type and live with all happiness.

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ஓ

Gurupadam

Dharmapura Adeenam Sri-la Sri Shanmuga Desika Gnanasambanda Paramacharya Swamigal

Dharmapuram,
Mayuram, P. O.

Date: 24-10-1974

Religions help us by inculcating bhakti and also by building up our character. The do's and don'ts prescribed in our religious texts are acceptable to the greatest scientists of today. Achara is the path to purity and it is linked with religion, as it is a basic necessity for religious life. Sivagnana Siddhiar makes it clear that only those who follow achara are the pure ones. In Tamil literature dharma and conduct are prescribed in didactic works like Thirukkural, Needhivenba and Aranerisaram. Those who went to tread the path of religion must necessarily practise those virtues. Chidambara Munivar who was closely associated with Dharmapura Adheenam has written a book entitled "Nitya Karma Neri" containing in itself the essence of the achara prescribed by Sivagamas, Upanishads, Thiru-

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murais, and Puranas. "Saiva Samaya Neri" is another work of that kind. Arumuga Navalar of Jaffna has brought out these injunctions in the form of questions and answers.

This book on "achara" is very welcome at a time when acharas and niyamas are on the decline. It explains the nityakarmas, religious rituals etc. which are essential for a good life. Mayuram Sri Ramanatha Dikshithar is a profound scholar in Sanskrit and is an expert speaker on religious subjects. This book of his will be of great help to those interested in leading religious lives.

May all people read and understand this book, practise the injunctions contained in it and get all the good things of life by the grace of God!

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From

Rajadurbar, Khatmandu, NEPAL

KAVIRAJ SRI THIRTHARAJA SARMA,

Ayurveda Dharma Sastra Acharya,

I read, with interest, books on Bharat Sthala Yatra, Achara etc. written in Sanskrit and other languages by Srimad Vidwatvara Sri Ramanatha Dikshitar.

You are taking pains to propagate dharma. You have made Vyasacharya's statement that sadhus purify the thirthas under the pretext of bathing in them, very meaningful. With a deep knowledge of the Vedas, Dharmasastras, Puranas and other scriptures, you have given their quintessence. Sri Harsha said, "You must study the Vedas with their meaning, propagate the truths enshrined in them and also practise their injunctions." True to that saying, you have gone on a pilgrimage to holy places like Kasi, Prayag, Gaya, Napal and Rameswaram. As a result of these visits and your sastraic knowledge you have given to the world several good books. They will be of great help to the asthikas following the sanathana dharma (Hinduism). My best wishes to you.

Vik - 2029
Aswina Sukla Poornima } Kaviraj Thirtharaja Sarma.

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Raj Bhavan
Madras. 600022
March, 6, 1975

FOREWORD

Hinduism is a great, grand and ancient edifice. Its scriptures and sastras, epics and stories, have a far deeper meaning than what appears on the surface. If we go still deeper into them, we will discover a scientific basis which, in course of time has become blurred.

I am very happy that great scholars like Thiru M. Ramanatha Dikshithar are engaged in bringing our great treasures to light in this modern world for the benefit of the younger generation. I therefore welcome his publication "ACHARAMURAI". It contains scriptural injunctions which apply to all our daily activities, our conduct and rectitude. "Achara" is righteous conduct. By following these rules of conduct, we develop a sense of duty towards parents, elders, society and country; learn to maintain perfect health, and to keep the environs in hygienic conditions; and work for peace and harmony in private, social and public life. I am sure, the detailed instructions contained in this work will be of great value and benefit to the youth. I wish this publication wide circulation.

Sd. K. K. SHAH
Governor of Tamilnadu.

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தொலைபேசி: 431112

டாக்டர் ச. வே. சுப்பிரமணியன்.
பேராசிரியர்-முதன்மை அலுவல் ஆட்சியர்
உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம்,
அடையாறு, சென்னை-600020.

அணிந்துரை

பண்டைய இந்தியர்களும் இந்துக்களும் மிக உயர்ந்த பண்பாட்டு நெறிப்பட்ட வாழ்க்கை விதி முறைகளைக் கடைப்பிடித்து வந்தவர்கள். அதனால் அந்நாளில் மக்களினமும், நாடும் வளம் பெற்றிருந்தது. ஆனால் இன்று இயற்கை நெறியினின்றும் வழுவிய வாழ்க்கை முறையால் நம் நாட்டில் கொடிய பஞ்சமும், அல்லலும் தோன்றிக் கொண்டிருக்கின்றன. வேத, நீதி இலக்கியங்களில் கூறப்பட்டுள்ள வாழ்க்கை விதிமுறைகளை நாம் அடியோடு மறந்து விட்டோம். இன்று எந்த இந்துவுக்கும் தன்னுடைய வாழ்க்கை விதிமுறைகள் பற்றி முழுமையாகத் தெரியாது எனலாம். நம்முடைய கொள்கைகளையும், கோட்பாடுகளையும் பிறர் உணர்த்துகின்ற அவல நிலையில் நாம் இருக்கின்றோம். ஸ்ரீ காஞ்சி காமகோடி பீடாதிபதி ஆச்சாரிய சுவாமிகள் இந்து சமய மானிடவர்க்கக் கொள்கைகளான குளிக்கும் முறை, தியானம் செய்யும் முறை, உண்டி, உடை, உறைவிடங்களில் அனுசரிக்கும் முறைகள், மன்னரின் நீதி, மாணவர் கடமை, புதல்வர்களின்

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கடமை, இல்லறத்தோரின் ஈகை, ஆத்ம குணங்கள்— போன்றவற்றை மிக விரிவாகவும், விளக்கமாகவும் நமக்கு உணர்த்த வேண்டுமென எண்ணினர்கள்.

அவ்வெண்ணத்தை ஸ்ரீ இராமநாத தீட்சதர் அவர்கள், உயர்ந்த பண்பும், சிறந்த இந்து சமய நெறி முறைப்பட்ட குடும்பத்தில் தோன்றிய உயர்திரு அழகிய நம்பியா பிள்ளையவர்களின் புதல்வர் திரு சுப்பிரமணிய பிள்ளையிடம் கூறினர்கள். அவர்கள் ஆச்சார்ய சுவாமிகளின் திருவாக்கை பெரும்பேருகக் கருதித் தான் அங்கம் வகிக்கும் அழகியகன்னி விநாயகர் கோவில் திருப்பணிக் குழுவின் வாயிலாக "ஆசார முறை" என்ற தலைப்பில் அந்நூலை வெளியிட எண்ணினர்கள். இக்கிடைத்தற்கரிய வாய்ப்பினை அருள் வாக்காகக் கருதி அதற்குரிய பொருளுதவியைச் செய்துள்ளார்கள். அதன் வழி இந்நூல் வெளி வருகின்றது.

அண்மையில் இறைவன் அருளால் ஸ்ரீ காஞ்சி காமகோடி பீடாதிபதி அவர்கள் கலவை என்ற ஊரில் சுவாமிகள் ஆயிரம் பிறை கண்ட மாசி மகம் முழுமதி நாளன்று அடியேனும் கலந்து கொள்வதற்குரிய வாய்ப்புக் கிடைத்தது. இப்பெரும் வாய்ப்பினை அடியேன் திரு. சுப்பிரமணிய பிள்ளையுடன் சென்ற காரணத்தினால் பெற்றேன். அன்று சுவாமிகள் ஒரு மணி நேரம் சந்திரனை நோக்கிச் செய்த வழிபாட்டில் எங்களை மறந்து அருள் வெள்ளத்தில் மூழ்கித் திளைத்து மகிழ்கின்ற பேறும் கிட்டியது. அப்

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புனிதக் காட்சி என் நெஞ்சிருக்கும் வரை நிலை விருக்கும்.

இந் நூலாக்கத்திற்குப் பெரியவர்கள், இந்து சமய வேத, நீதி நூற்களில் பாண்டித்யம் பெற்ற வரும் அவைகளில் கூறப்பட்ட கருத்துக்களை அறிந்து உணர்த்த வல்லவருமான உயர் திரு. இராமநாத தீட்சிதர் அவர்களிடம் ஒப்படைத்தனர். அவர்கள் மேற்கூறிய நூல்களின் சான்றுகளை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டே இந்நூலுள் இந்துவாகப் பிறவி கொண்ட ஒவ்வொருவரும் பிறப்பு முதல் இறப்பு வரை கடைப் பிடித்தொழுக வேண்டிய விதி முறைகளைத் தத்து வார்த்த முறைப்படி விளக்கிச் சென்றுள்ளமை இந் நூலாசிரியரின் திறமைக்குச் சான்று பகரும்.

இப் பெருங் கைங்கர்யத்தில் அடியேனுக்கு அந் நூலைப் படிக்கும் பேறும், அணிந்துரை எழுதும் வாய்ப்பும் கிடைத்திருப்பது இராமாயணத்தில் இராமபிரானுக்கு அணில் தொண்டு செய்து உவந்த பேற்றினுக்கு ஒப்பதாகும். இவ்வரிய வாய்ப்பிற்காக சுவாமிகளுக்கும், மேற்கூறியவர்களுக்கும் என் பணி வான நன்றியையும், வணக்கத்தையும் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கின்றேன்.

இந் நூலை இந்தியர்களாகிய இந்துக்கள் அனை வரும் படித்துப் பயன் பெற்று, மனித இனம் இயற்கை நெறியில் வாழ வழி வகுக்க வேண்டு மென்பதே என் அவா.

10—4—'75. ச. வே. சுப்பிரமணியன்

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PREFACE

Our Sanathana Dharma is the oldest of religions and the name Hindu is of a later origin. Religions have their scriptures and ours are the vedas which contain the quitesence of the Hindu religions thought and philosophy The word "Sanathana" means that which knows not a beginning or an end. Birth into this faith has been the envy even of gods from time immemorial.

Our Sastras put the number of the species of life in creation at an odd figure of 84,00,000 and man is regarded as a higher manifestation. It should be fortunate to one to take be born done as a Hindu. This country, we call Bharat is holier than Heaven itself and we enjoy the fruits of one's good actions here, and heaven. This is a place at once for the enjoyment of wordly pleasures and for spiritual practice. It is for this simple reason that Dhamayanthi, an ideal image of Hindu womanhood, made her choice for Nalan a human, as her husband, rejleting the hands of such gods as Indra and others.

One who is born into this holy land should be worthy of its rich spiritual heritage. He must deem it an opportunity to prepare himself for the attainment of salvation, which is the very purpose of this life. The proper sadanas for this attainment of oneness with god-liberation from the cycle of Birth are well enshrined in the Vedas. Puranas are exemplified commentaries which

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try to expound and enlighten us on the substance and meaning of the Vedas.

Path to God realization is three fold, viz., Karma, Bhakti and Gnana. Faithful adherence to one's code of conduct and sincere performance of one's duties purify the mind and flood the heart with Bhakti. Bhakti, ripe and total earns are god's love, and the knowledge of the Supreme is attained.

Our joys and sorrows in this life result from our karma through many a birth. We are not directly responsible for them, nor can we influence them in any manner. Sages Janaka and Yagjnavalkiya testify to this in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. It is of great importance that we should function in society with an ensuring fortitude of mind, and in accordance with the dharmic code prescribed.

Let it not pass our comprehension that gods and our own forbears in the hereafter one dependant upon us. Failure on our part to execute our duties by them is tantamount to cheating them. This is what Bhagvan Krishna points out in the Gita. A Hindu is endowed with a clear perception of what is good and what is evil. Gita stipulates the various functions a man should perform in his day-to-day life, and the part to be played by a devoted and chaste woman. In fact the ideal of Varnashrama Dharma as a way of life and its significance as a social order based on duty and work are presented in their perspective. Self confidence purity, or mind, selflessness, detachment, truthfulness and love for all beings

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are the essential qualities that go to make a Hindu personality.

Our Maharishis have handed down to us an intelligent common code of Dharma. But one has to take to and follow it according to one's own nature, ability and upbringing. The methods and applications may be different but the outcome is one and the same.

Vital is our Hindu women's part in the effective practice of the Dharma. A wife has to be with her husband helping in his activities and after him with her brothers and sons. Our Sastras place the faithful woman on par with goddess Parvathi Herself and this is one of the aspects that make for the greatness of our Bharat.

The principles of our Dharma spring from the deep experience of our ancestors and have the authority of our scriptures, and this speaks for their all time relevance. It is nothing wrong if we follow and practice with such slight modifications and changes here and there as may be necessitated by the changing spirit of time.

Acharakovai, one of the ancient books of ethics in Tamil, enumerates our daily obligations in unmistakable terms: The proud possessions of a faithful follower of dharma are noble birth, disciplined life, wealth, beauty, ownership of land, fame, education and health. The book offers us a well set pattern of day-to-day life an individual has to adopt and stick to. To get up early in the morning, prayer, bath, norms of cooking, the austerities one should observe in order to beget good progeny are some of the things emphasis is laid upon.

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Nithya Karma to Neri is another similar piece of ethics by His Holiness Dharmapura Adheenam Chidambaranatha Munivar and composed of 755 complete as Thirukkural. The book specifically instruct us in the Anushtanas ranging from such activities as the morning bath to Siva Pooja and Surya Pooja. This is a Saivite work and "Srivaishnava Nithyanushtanakrama" 195 paged, Lifco published edition, based on old Granthas can be said to be its Vaishnavite counterpart.

Soucham, Achamanam, pranayamam and Snanam, Puntradharana, Sandhya, Thiruvaradana and meals are some of the important features of Anushtana that this work deals with in a detailed manner. Hindu literature abounds with such fine works on Dharma and a devout Hindu has to learn a lot from them. The source of these books is our scriptures ond our great Maharishis are the authorities on this subject.

Sri Mukhas of Madathipathies and introductions given by eminent persons in Sanskrit and Tamil have been translated and published in English.

This is a small contribution from me in the line, and I gratefully place it at the lotus feet of His Holiness Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Acharyal whose divine grace and blessings have made it possible for me to make this attempt.

AUTHOR.

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K. VEERASWAMI,
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July 17, 1975.

Brahmashri M. Ramanatha Deekshitar's "Achara Murai" is well worth reading for daily observance. The Tamil, Sanskrit and English versions of the book have been carefully brought out, as is usual with Deekshitar. Many of the rules of conduct are reminiscent of the gems found in Thirukkural, Vedas, Dharma Sastras and Puranas. I commend this book for wide circulation.

(Sd.) K. Veeraswami.

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धर्मशास्त्रम्
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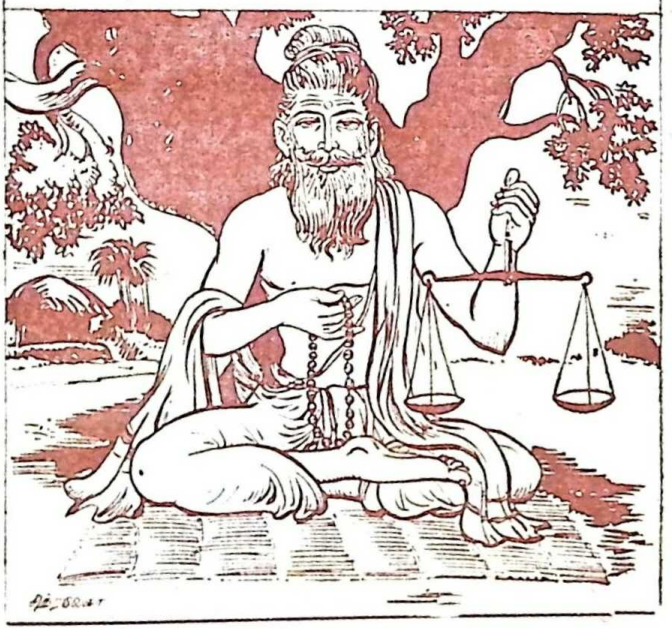

धर्मशास्त्र सितं शान्तं चारुवक्त्रं कुशासनम् ।
मुक्ता जपाक्षधृक् दक्षे तुलाहस्तं तु वामतः ॥

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CODE OF GOOD CONDUCT
And VIRTUOUS (GOOD) PRACTICES

Good conduct (Achara)

Good conduct is quite essential in all acts that we perform, in worship and in discharging the daily routines of life.

Virtuous (Good) Practies

Good conduct is regarded as supreme Dhrma. Good conduct leads to long life, the attainment of good children, wealth and health of mind and body. The good conduct of a person shows his good parentage and breeding. Hence it is dearer than life to a person.

A person who leads a bad life is disliked and avoided by all. He is always miserable. He is afflicted with diseases. He meets with untimely death. Apart from a common code of conduct, there are certain special good practices pertaining to a man's native land, his family and religion, but these special practices, must be given up, if they violate the general rules of good conduct, as laid down in scriptures and religious books.

Early Rising

About an hour before sun-rise is considered divine. The gods and the spirits of our ancestors visit the earth at that hour. We should then keep awake; we thus

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honour the gods and our ancestors. We get peace of mind at that time and we will not meet with untimely death.

After we get up from bed, we should reverently think of our spiritual teacher, parents, Vishnu, Siva, the nine planetary deities, and the great and good men and women of the past. like Emperor Nala, Empress Damayanthi. King Rittuparana. The contemplation of these good souls keeps us off the evil time spirit.

Then we should search our hearts and think of the acts of charity and good turns done by us during the previous day; we should also regret any falshood if uttered by us that day. Then we should chalk out the path of Dharma to be followed that day, as well as the rightful efforts that we should take for getting wealth and the pleasures of life.

Things to be sighted at dawn

It is auspicious to see these at dawn, after we get up: the cow, light, water, mirror, the Vedic scholar and the person who performed 'Agni-chayana', gold, precious stones, the five-fold mixture, goroehana, thinai corn, white mustard, honey and other good things. We should avoid the sight of sinners, miserable people, naked persons and de-formed persons.

It is good to tend pigions, and parrots in our houses as we will be then free from the fear of evil spirits and ghosts.

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The calls of nature

When we have to answer the calls of nature, we must go a little far from our houses, towards south-west and ease ourselves, We should then cover our heads with cloth and we must not touch our heads then. We should also close our mouth and nose with cloth. We should cover the ground with dried grass, before discharging urine and passing stools and sit, facing the North during day time and the evening and the south at night.

Purification

We should purify our bodies with earth and water. We should take a little earth and cleanse our private parts thrice and our hands and feet several times. The process of cleansing the mouth with water must be done after passing urine and stools, four and eight times respectively and after taking meals and after cleaning the teeth about twelve and sixteen times respectively.

Holy Intake of Water (Achamana)

After washing our feet, hands and faces, we should squat with hands between the knees, with face eastward; than we should take only a little water in the palm of the right hand as a cup. The thumb and the little finger should be set apart and then we should sip the water thrice. Then we should rub our faces with the lower portion of the thumb. Then we should apply the holy touch to the vital parts of our face,—cheeks, eyes, ears, shoulders, abdomen, chest head and organs, beginning with the right portion, with the fingers one after another all the time uttering the holy names:—Kesava, Narayana,

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Madhava, Govinda, Vishnu, Madhusudana. Thrivikrama, Vamana, Sridahra, Hrishikesa, Padmanabha, Damodara. Water that is hoi, muddy and saltish must be avolded.

While sipping the holy water, we should not be standing, talking, laughing, listening to the words of wicked people, touching others or turning towards other directions.

At that time we should not cover our heads with cloth. The cloth should not be let loose, nor the hair on the head. We should not wear shoes or put on shirts.

The Occasion for the Achamana

We should sip water in the prescribed manner, before beginning the worship of gods and our spiritual teacher, before taking meals and commencing any auspicious act. We should also take the Achamana after bathing, drinking milk, taking meals and after sleeping or sneezing. We should commence every auspicious act with Achamana in order to attain the full merit of that act.

Cleaning the teeth

We shouid clean our teeth and faces before commencing any good act. We should squat with knees raised, with face turned eastward. We should clean the teeth with tender green twigs of certain plants and trees like the Neem, the banyan, or the leaves of the Mango tree. On certain days like Prathamai, Full-Moonday, New-Moon day, Chathurdasi, Shasti, Ashtami, Navami, the first day of the Month and fast days, we should clean the

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teeth only with mango leaves. If we use tooth powder, we should use the middle finger or thumb and not the fore finger.

Bathing

While a person is sleeping his sense organs get confused and impure; hence he should take a bath early in the morning to purify himself.

The early morning bath helps a person to keep his body handsome, and healthy and frees him from his sins. He should not undertake to do any act in the morning before taking the bath. These are the ten benefits that a person attains from the early morning bath: Bodily beauty, brightness, strength, purity, longevity, health, detachment, freedom from the evil effects of bad dreams. courage and mental alertness.

The time for Bathing

The period - about 4.30 in the early morning is the dawn of the day, A Bath at that time is considered the most suitable. Those who are physically weak may take the bath a little before sunrise or just at sunrise. Early morning bath yields valuable merit which is as good as that attained by rich gifts of gold to the deserving.

How to take the Holy Bath

Before taking the bath a person should wash his feet, sip water with the holy names on the lips and meditate on the Lord. Then he should mention the year, the month and the day and mentally resolve to have the

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bath; He should get into the tank or river, so that the water may be up to his waist. If it is the running water, he must face the sun and in the evening face westwards, at night towards the north. If there is a temple in front of the tank, he must face the temple front. A holy bath taken in this manner makes the person fit enough to undertake the worship of gods or ancestors.

While taking the bath a person should think of the Lord and utter the name "Gange" thrice. sprinkle the water nine times over his head and body and also think of the blessed feet of his spiritual teacher. He should then take the water in his palms and offer it in the tank, chanting the sacred words—"May the whole universe be satisfied and happy."

After the bath he should go up, out of the tank and rub his body with a dry cloth or if it is wet cloth it must be waved up and down seven times before rubbing his body.

Some kinds of Bath

This holy morning bath is of two kinds: principal bath and modified virtual one. The principal bath is done when the head is immersed in water. This bath is of six kinds: Daily routine bath, special bath, bath for attaining a desired end, bath as part of a rite, the purifying bath and religious bath.

The daily morning bath is the routine one. The bath done after the shave, after following a funeral procession, or after pollution of some kind is the special

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bath. On these occasions, a person should immerse his head thirteen times at a time in water, wear his clothes after waring them up and down seven times and then bathe again. The bath taken on sacred days like Pushyam is the bath done for a desired end. The bath taken before worshipping gods or before the annual ceremony for ancestors is a bath done as part of that particular rite.

An oil bath cleanses the body. A bath at sacred rivers or tanks is considered a religious rite. Bath is also taken on special occasions like Solar - Lunar eclipse, after a period of pollution and by women after monthly period. The bath after pollution should be had about two houls and a half after sun rise. Women after the monthly period of three days should take the bath about five hours after sun rise.

An oil bath should be avolded in the early morning before sun-rise; it is permitted only on Deepavali days. Medicated oil or oil with Thulasi leaves may be taken in the morning. According to certain sages about an hour or two hours and a half after sun-rise may be considered as early morning hours.

Virtual bath (Gauna)

When a person cannot take a regular bath on account of weakness, or on account of cold weather, he may take a virtual bath in the following six ways :

(Agneyam) bath through fire (Agni) fire, taken when he besmears his body with sacred burnt ashes (Vibhuthi).

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(Brahmic bath) Bath taken by sprinkling water on the body with Kusagram. (Vasavya) bath with the dust of the cows feet codly bath taken in rain water while the sun shines, (Kapilam) bath by rubbing the whole body with a wet cloth from head to feet, mental bath taken while meditating on the Lord.

Wearing Clothes

A person should wear two kinds of clothes one below the waist and the other for the upper part of the body. The cloth should be white with a border. When a person is engaged in any sacred act, he should wear the cloth like the trousers (Kacha). New cloth may be used when engaged in an auspicious act. Clothes onee used are not considered good enough for a wear a second time without being washed and dried. When the clothes are dried, the ends of the clothes should be turned towards the east or north. Blue or black coloured clothes should be avoided, when a person is engaged in any auspicious act. These colours are good enough in the case of silk or woolen clothes.

Putting on Sacred Marks

6. A person after wearing his clothes, and washing his legs and sipping water (Achamana) should put on sacred marks on his body, He may wear the triple marks on his forehead with sacred ashes, sandal paste or white holy earth according to his family tradition. He should put on these sacred marks before he is engaged in any religious or auspicious act. Then according to his family tradition he must engage his mind in meditating on

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certain sacred words (Manthra) in which he has been initiated by a spiritual teacher. According to a person's family tradition the Mantra may be Panchakshara, Ashtakshara, Panchadasi, or Pertaining to Ganapathi, Subramanya or Sree Rama.

How to Meditate

When the person is engaged in meditation he may utter the sacred words in a loud or low voice. He may otherwise, meditate on the words without uttering them. Silent meditation is more fruitful and effective than that done in either of the previous ways followed. At that time the person should keep his mind calm and pleased, he should keep silent and meditate on the import of the Mantra; he should not then divert himself to any other kind of work.

A person should *not* cover his upper body with clothes while engaged in meditation, going the holy rounds (Pradakshina) prostration, worship of gods or fire worship (Homa). He may wear the upper cloth over the left shoulder like the sacred thread. On these holy occasions, he should not wear torn clothes or only one piece of cloth over his body, or without the upper cloth.

Meditation (Japa) on the Holy names

1. Sri Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Jaya Rama—This is said to be a mantra with thirteen letters (Throyadasakshari)

2. Sivarama Govinda Narayana Mahadeva—This mantra is said to consist of fifteen letters (Panchadasakshari)

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3. " Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare " is said to be a mantra with sixteen letters.

4. " Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare " This is also a Mantra of sixteen letters.

5. Mahadeva Virupaksha, Gangadhara Mrityunjaya. This too is a mantra with sixteen letters. (Shodasaksnari)

6. Sivasankara, Sarvathman, Sri Mathar Jagathambike. This is a mantra with seventeen letters.

We can also chant mantras with hundred and eight holy names, three hundred and thousand holy names.

The Rosary

A person may wear a rosary, which is a string of beads; the beads may be of gold, silver, copper, spatika glass, gems, Rudraksha, lotus beads or knots of kusagass. He may tell the beads while chanting the mantra. The rosary should consist of 108, 54 or 27 beads. The rosary should be held with the middle finger and beads should be turned with the thumb while counting them. While telling the beads, he should not pass over the middle bead which is termed as 'Meru'.

Worship (Puja)

A person should daily offer worship to Ganesha, Subhramanya, Devi (Goddess), Siva, Vishnu, Surya, (the Sun), Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Durga or any divine form of "His" choice and his family deity.

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These divine forms should be worshipped separately or all at the same time. The object of worship may be an image (Bimba), yanthra or a picture. The worship is to be done in the morning or at noon. The Puja should consist of bathing the image. anointing it with sandal paste, offering of flowers, Dupa (Scented smoke in fire) waving of lights (Deepa), offering of food and betel and burning of camphor. Then he should turn round and round himself (Pradakshina) and then prostrate himself. Then he should chant the holy mantras and utter prayers. Of course in the case of a picture that is worshipped, no bathing is done; only sprinkling of water on it is done.

A person according to his resources may bathe the images with eleven materials and substances. These are: (1) Scented oil (2) The five fold mixture (Panchagavya) consisting of Cow's milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung (3) The five-fold sweet mixture (Panchamritha) consisting of Milk, curd, ghee, honey, brown sugar (4) Ghee (5) Milk (6) Curd (7) Honey (8) Sugar cane juice (9 Fruit juice (10) Coconut water (11) Sandal. The images may be bathed in the above order or chanting Moola Manthras. If a person does not find it convenient to offer worship daily in all details and forms, he may do so on specific occasions. These Special occasions are the following :—The time when a person gets sight of bad omens, when he has had a bad dream, when any fearful event happens, the visit of great men, the first day of the month, (Sankramana) the day when his birth star occurs,

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Sravana, the twelfth day of the fortnight, full-moon day, new-moon day, Sri Jayanthi, Sri Rama Navami and Dasara.

1. A person should perform the Puja as prescribed herein before dawn in the month of Margasirsha, Such a worship is considered as meritorious as the worship offered for a thousand years. Cooked rice with dhall (Pongal) should be offered as Naivedya.

2. At the end of the Puja the devotee should prostrate himself before the images. At that time his legs, knees, shoulders, chest, head, eyes, mind and speech must be made to lie on the earth (except the mind and speech)

3. A person who, on account of laziness or ignorance, eats before performing the daily pooja is doomed to hell. Puja performed thrice a day will yield special merit to the devotee.

4. If specially prepared Nivedana is not available Milk, fruit or water may be offered as such. If nothing is available, the offering may be made mentally through meditation.

The Materials for Puja

A person should gather the flowers with his own hands; this is the best way. If they are brought from the garden by another, it is of less value but good enough. Flowers if purchased for money are not good.

Flowers belonging to others are quite unsuitable as offerings; The following kinds of flowers are unsuitable

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for worship — flowers gathered on the previous day, flowers eaten by insects, flowers trodden over with the feet, those touched by unclean persons, those without sweet smell, those carried on the palm (without being collected in a special clean container) those carried in a piece of cloth, unpacked flowers that had fallen on the ground, and those from the temple garden. Golden flowers cleaned with water every day may be offered in worship. The Bilwa leaves and Tulasi leaves may be used for a week, The flowers of Erukku plant and oomathai may be offered in worshipping Siva. The following leaves and flowers should not be used in worshipping the following Gods respectively; fine grass for Devi, Tulasi for Ganesa, Bilwa for Surya, the white Thalambū for Siva, Erukku and Oomathai for Vishnu. When bathing the images with water, it is good to mix with it scents like Kumkum a flowers and special camphor The following materials are suitable for the Abhisheka:— Cow's milk, curd, ghee, honey, sugarcane juice, the juice of lemon and oranges, coconut water and sandal. It is quite good to see that the flowers cover the images without interspace. The scented smoke (Doopa) is to be waved near the feet of the images and the lights (Deepa) should be waved in front of the faces of the images. Pure cooked rice, coconuts and sweets after being sprinkled over with ghee are to be offered to the images. Then followes the offering of betel with nuts and camphor light. The worshipper should then make the holy rounds, thrice, round and round himself and then prostrate himself five times. Then he should recite or read hymns and prayers. The tulsi leaves should not be gathered the

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following days: Friday, Tuesday, afternoon, the first day of the month, Parva, the twelfth day of fortnight and nights etc.

Every home must have in it a shrine with any image, Yanthra or divine picture of one's own choice and it should be daily worshipped in a suitable manner according to one's resources and capacity. A house without the divine image is as unholy as the burning ground. Mere talk not pertaining to God is likened to the hawl of a jackal. The body of a person without the talk of God is as unholy as the corpse. The food taken without being offered to God is as bad as poison. Thus declare the Sastras. A person with the following features is verily God Achutha himself; a heart with the image of God, the tongue uttering the holy names of the Lord, the stomach with the food that has been offered to God and the holy water after Abhisheka and the leaf be decked with the flowers offered to God.

Offering of food as sacrament.

After the worship is over, a person should offer on the ground food as sacrament to the following in order, heavenly gods, ancestral spirits, other spirits, at that time he must meditate on each of these in order. This is said to be offering of food as sacrament (Baliharanam).

While the male head of the family is not at home, the women can do this offering. This offering to others is quite essential as the Gita declares that a person who eats the food before it is offered to Gods and other beings is

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verily a thief. Then a person should be awaiting for some time the visit of any guest, and after feeding him, he should take his meal only after feeding his parents, children and pregnant women. He should make it a point to offer food to a cow, uttering a certain manthra (Quoted elsewhere).

Worship of Guests

A person, before taking his meal, should offer food to those who beg for food. The following persons are to be treated as guests who should be honoured with food. The Sanyasi (Ascentic), The Brahmachari (The bachelor), the Student, a man who feeds his parents, the pilgrim and an unemployed person. The food offered to an ascentic pleases Lord Vishnu and satisfies the universe.

The Daily Meal

If a person takes one meal during the day and another at night and if he does not take any food between the two meals, it may be said that he is virtually observing a fast, Before taking the meal he should wash his hands and feet and take the Achamana. He should sit facing the east and eat in silence. The ground should be cleaned and purified before the leaf is spread. When the cleaning is done with water, it must be in the form of a figure with four corners according to the size of the leaf, in the form of a traiangle or like the shape of the crescent moon according to the Varna (caste) of the person in the order referred to. It is said that Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra occupy the spot cleaned in such a manner. If the purification is not done, Rakshasas and demons will rob

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the food of its essence. The person should be seated on a plank, without placing his feet on the seat. It is good to sit alone while taking the meal.

A person should sit at that time facing the east if he desires long life, the south if he wants fame and name, the west if he wants wealth, the north if he seeks Moksha (liberation).

The meal should be served in a vessel made of gold, silver, copper (Thamra) Bronze or on the plantain leaf. The lotus leaf or the leaf of the purasa tree may be used only by a bachelor or a Sanyasi. If the vesssel is made of a metal and if it weighs about twenty palams, (750 gms) it may be used daily after being washed.

Note worthy points during the meal time

The meal should not be served in a vessel made of iron, mud pot, the backside of a leaf, cloth, black rock, leaves of the banyan or aswatha tree and leaves of the erukku plant. Water should not be drunk from one palm or both the palms.

Just before taking the meal a person should worship the food that is served and pray for its blessing to all beings. He should not despise the food. It is good to eat silently, but at that time he may express his desire for any item of food or drink. He may also commence any item to any guest who is also with him or he may utter the name of the Lord. In order to derive health and strength from the meal, he should first have the

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liquid preparations then the solid preparation and finish with the liquid preparations.

3. A person should have his meal when he is hungry; he should not over eat; he should take ghee and other fats. The meal should be hot. It should be taken quickly. If these rules are observed, a person will derive health and strength from such a meal. A person who eats moderately will be blessed with health, long life, energy, strength and mental alertness. He will also get good children and lead a blameless life.

4. He should not wear only one piece of cloth while eating. The meal should not be taken when the door of the house is not closed. It should not be taken while going in a carriage or while lying down or with shoes on. It should not be taken in moonlight or with the light of burning faggots. While taking the meal, corners of rooms, dusty Places and crowded places should be avoided. The portion of a cake or fruit that is left over after being bitten with teeth should be avoided.

Certain things prohibited

A person should avoid taking the meal in the company of women even if they were his mother, sister or wife. If he does so, he should purify himself by observing the Chandrayana vow. His wife should not stand before him at that time and look at him while eating; if she does so she will get weak children. During journey or the day of wedding, he may take his meal along with his wife.

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2. When serving meal to a number of people sitting in company no discrimination should be shown in serving different kinds of food. It is as bad as poison.

3. While eating in company, if the remains of a meal from a neighbour's leaf get into the leaf of another, a fresh leaf in a clean place should be used for service.

4. While eating, water should be placed on the right hand side and While drinking water, the right hand should be on the leaf (Bhojanapatram).

Food should not be served or kept in vessels made of iron. Then, it is to be considered very harmful. Sweets or fruits which are served at meal time should be first served to children. If unclean things like hair, nails, or germs are found in the food that is served, that portion should be thrown off and water should be sprinkled along with sacred ashes over the remaining portion and then used.

What to avoid

If we avoid certain items of food and take the approved ones, our minds become pure. Then our minds turn to Godly acts and we obtain great benefit; if we eat the things which are considered unsuitable then our minds become impure. They affect health and shorten our life-span; hence it is quite necessary to avoid such things.

Certain vegetables like onion, garlick, pumpkin, should not be eaten. If they are used for their medicinal value, then we should perform purificatory rites. Cooked food is unsuitable after three hours. Cold food, that ha

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lost its flavour and taste, food mixed with intoxicating stuff, and food that has been looked at by undesirable persons should be avoided.

Drinking water should be taken from the right side of a person at meals. The following items of food are unsuitable :—

Milk, curd or honey kept in copper vessels, coconut water in bronze vessels, milk or ghee mixed with salt, salt that is served separately, milk of camels, goats or other wild animals, milk of cows obtained within ten days after they had given birth to calves, or milk of pregnant cows. Gooseberry fruit, should not be taken during night meal and on Sundays and on Saptami days and food that remains after ancestral ceremonies of relatives other than Dayadhis should not ba taken.

After the meals

A person should wash his mouth twelve times with water, after eating. Then he should wash his hands and feet and sip the holy water.

A person should not use the following belonging to others :— food, water, woman and house; such use ruins his wealth. In such circumstances, he should perform purificatory rites; if he cannot do so, he should take his meal once at the house of a pious person who is noted for his good conduct and Vedantic learning.

Fasting

A person from the age of eight to eighty, should observe holy fasts— complete fast on Ekadasi days,

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during the night on Sunday, Full moon day and New moon days, and during day time on Ashtami and Chathurdasi days. Fasting on eclipse days:—Twelve hours before the Solar Eclipse, about nine hours before the Lūnar Eclipse, during day and night if the solar eclipse occurs at sun set; during night and day if the lunar eclipse occurs at moonset. On the occasions holy reeds (Dharbha) should be put over pickles, sweets, milk, curd, oil so that they may be kept pure and used after the eclipse. Children, aged persons, and sick persons may take food on these occasions. Bath has been prescribed during the time of eclipse for persons of all castes, the young and the old.

On these occasions a person should offer some gifts to holy persons as much as he can. He should perform ceremonies by gifts of money; He should also perform ceremonial offering of water (Tharpanam).

It has been pointed out that guests should be fed first before a person takes his meals. Sage Thiruvalluvar has pointed out the value of the worship of guests in glowing terms, as given below:—"Gods will honour a person who honours his guests. A householder runs his house for his guests. He should not take even nectar without sharing t with his guests."

A person after his meals, should think reverently of King Saryathi, Sukanya, Sage Syavana, Devendra, Aswini Gods; By doing so his eyesight will not be lost.

A person after his meals, should walk a little and then recline and take rest. Then he should devote him-

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self to the study of Puranas, Ithihasas, Vedanta and Dharma Sastras. He should not sleep during day time.

Chewing Betels

A person should first put the betel leaves in his mouth and then put the nuts. The ends of the betel leaves and the middle line should be removed. The thumb should be used in applying the chunam to the betel leaves and not the forefinger. Too much use of betel leaves will affect the strength of mind and body of the person. The leaf on which the chunam has been kept should not be used. It will add to the health of a person, if he uses more of nuts after sleep, more of chunam after meals, and more of betel leaves at nights.

Sleep

A person while taking his bed, should see that his head is turned towards the south or the east. It is pointed out by some that a person's head should be turned towards the west during his journey. He should avoid always the northern direction for his head. He should keep a vessel of water and a stick near his bed, while sleeping. Just before sleeping he should think of Agasthya, Vishnu, Emperor Muchukunda, sage Kapila and Asthika. He should recite the verse relating to these holy persons and pray to Asthika, son of Jarathkaru to keep off the fear of serpents.

A person should sleep for six hours from about 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. He should avoid sleep during the early part or the latter part of the night; thus he will preserve his

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health. He should not remain naked during sleep. Then he should get up early in the morning.

Thus the duties that a person ought to discharge from morning to night form his holy routine. A person should not fail to follow this routine on account of lack of faith or laziness. A person who fails to observe this routine will suffer in hell and will be reborn as a crow. If he observes this routine with faith, he will be blessed by God and will enjoy happiness here and hereafter.

Other Rules of Good Conduct

person should speak the truth without wounding the feelings of others. He should never speak untruth just to please others. The Dharma of a person alone stands in good stead by his soul after his death; his learning will support him when he goes abroad, his wife will help him at home, his acts of charity will help him at death.

A person's brothers, son and himself should not have a shave on the same day. He shall utter the word, "Chiranjeeva" just after sneezing, he should chuckle his fingers after yawning. During walking, if a person gets obstructed, he should take a little earth from that spot and put it on his forehead, otherwise his life gets shortened.

A few Other Rules of Good Conduct.

Males should not put off the light. Women should not break open the cucumber fruit (pushani); such acts will ruin a person's family. He should keep the following nine facts about his life confidential :- his age, wealth,

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family squabbles, Manthram, Sexual enjoyment, medicine, income, charities, disgrace Even in times of distress, he should not covet other's wealth. A person should not go between cows, Brahmins, a couple, master and pupil, the lingam and Nandhi, the image and the Balipita.

He should not stand or sit in the shadow of a light or of a man; it will shorten his life. He should not have his shoes on while eating, sitting, prostrating, or blessing others. When a person happens to come across the following persons or places, he should walk round them :- the cow, a married woman whose husband is living (Sumangali), a temple, a place where four roads meet, charitable persons, and an ascetic. If he finds it difficult, he must do so with his mind.

He should keep off the following as they would affect his prosperity:- the dust from the feet of an ass, sheep, dog, the broom and dust when they are being removed, the air that comes out of the mouth of a person who is speaking, that from the cloth of another person. The following things will purify a person :- the smell that comes out of the Havis, the dust raised by cows, the sound when vedas are chanted.

Purification of things and Utensils

When any good act is to be performed, we must attend to the purification of the place, the person who is engaged in the act, and that of the utensils that are used. According to Manu the following things are purifying a person or thing :- Knowledge, penance, fire, food, earth, mind, water, upanjanam, the wind, sacred rites, the sun,

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and time. The Brahma Jnana purifies the mind, penance will free a person from his sins. Fire purifies dirt and dust. A person's good thoughts will cleanse him. Upanjanam, the cow's dung, rites and Aswameda sacrifice, - they will free a person from deadly sins.

The sun's rays purify a person or a place; when unclean things are seen the sight of the sun will purify a person. Time will purify a person, as the end of a period of ten days after the death of a relative will clean a person from the pollution. The wind purifies all places. Above all wealth earned by honest means is most purifying and a person should perform acts of charity with it.

The body is purified by a bath; the mind is purified by speaking the truth. Germs in vessels are cleansed with earth, ashes and water; pronze with ashes, copper and brass with tamarind, lead with salt, tamarind and water, curd and ghee, if unclean, by filtering through piece of cloth, cooked food with ghee, bed, seats, cot, blankets by sprinkling water over them, and by exposing them to the sun, wooden articles etc, are cleaned by chopping off a little portion, woollen goods and silk are cleaned with white mustard, loose earth, cow's urine, the fruit of vilva tree, Earthen pots are cleaned by heating them. The ground is purified by sweeping it, with fire, and by the tread of cows over it.

The Authorities of Dharma

The Dharma (Righteousness) is performed with the body, mind and speech; Dharma gives a person, happiness

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here and hereafter; it ultimately leads to his liberation from the cycle of birth and death. We are able to understand the nature of Dharma from the following:—the Vedas, Dharma Sastras, the example and the conduct of righteous persons, and their hearty approval of our acts.

The Dharma Sastras derive their authority from the Vedas; so if they contradict the Vedic truth, they are not to be followed. The traditional achara followed in a country or in a family, if it contradicts the Smrithis should not be followed.

The Smrithis had been codified by sages who had a vision of the Vedic truths. They are eighteen in number; there are also eighteen subsidiary smrithis. The Puranas and other sastras explain and illustrate the vedic truths in detail. Hence they are also taken as authentic sources of Dharma.

The Dharma Sastras

The Dharma Sastras point out the right path to persons whose minds are afflicted by passions like love and hatred, and poisoned by ignorance; and their teachings serve as medicine to such a mind. These Sastras show the right path to a person whose mind and sense organs distract him here and there.

The Vedas, Dharma Sastras and Puranas—all these serve as authentic sources of Dharma. If they are contradicting one another, the Smrithi which is not contradicting the Vedic truth must be followed. The Puranas which do not contradict the Vedas and the Smrithis are considered

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valid. Eighty eight thousand sages have codified the Smrithis ; of these eighteen are important: They explain very subtle truth. If they contradict one another, the Vedas serve as the supreme authority.

Suitable Dwelling Place

We should choose our residence in a place with facilities for the following—fuel for cooking and Homa, water for bathing, daily routine and drink, grass lawns for cows, the holy reeds (Dharba), flowers for worship, and open space for discharging urine and stools. We should also live amidst persons who lead good lives and are conversant with Sastras, and who are active. It is good to live on the banks of holy rivers like The Ganges. Purificatory rites (Prayaschitha) are intended mainly for those who do not live near rivers. A place frequented by the Deer (Krishnasara) is a Dharma Desa ; other holy places with the sacred shrines of Siva, Vishnu and Sakthi are also suitable as dwelling sites. The rivers which are considered as sacred as the Ganges are the following:— the Cauvery, the Thungabhadra, the Krishna Veni, the Gouthami.

Some General Rules of Good conduct

If there is no particular direction specified regarding a particular act, a person can perform it facing the East, North, or North-East. If he is unable to perform an act at the specified time, he can do it later. (Gauna-Kala)

If a person is unable to perform some religious act by himself, he may ask any one of the following persons to

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do it on his behalf:—son, the purohit, wife, brother, father, friend. An act done by such person is as meritorious as that done by himself.

A person may place his two feet below his two knees and be seated; it is considered Swasthikasana. This is suitable for doing all acts. If he places his two feet upon his two thighs, it is the Padmasana.

Where it is not stated by which hand an act should be done, good things should be done by the right and unpalatable things by the left hand.

Bath, sipping of water (Achamanam), fire sacrifice (Homam), taking of food, worship of Gods (Devas) and forefathers (Pitrus) etc. these should not be performed with the ankles and feet placed on the sitting plank.

Giving of alms or charity (Danam)

A person who gives alms or charity is praised by one and all. There is no other good turn which a person can do than this act of giving alms. It is proclaimed as very necessary even in the vedic texts.

Charity is divided into 4 kinds :

1. Routine (Nitya) that which is given daily without expecting any return.
2. Special (Nymithika), that which is given with the intention of washing off sins.
3. Expectant (Kamya) - that which is given with a desire to achieve a particular object like begetting a son, or realising victory or wealth etc.

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4. Blemishless-(Vimala)-that which is given without expecting any return and with great Bhakthi and solely to please Almighty.

In the Bhagavad Gita, there is a threefold division of dhanam, namely Sathviak, Rajasa, and Tamasa.

Sathvika dhanam is that which is given in holy places to deserving persons; that which is given expecting any return is called Rajasa dhanam; and that which is given without regard to place or time or in unsuitable places or times to undeserving persons and without respect is called Tamasa Dhanam.

If even one day passes without dhanam, that day should be considered as having been stolen by thieves. One's wealth should be spent in charity for one's enjoyment and to obtain fame; otherwise it is useless as well as harmful. If a person begs 'Give me, Give me' in this birth, he is said to be one who had been telling in his previous birth, 'No, No' to those who sought help from him. If one should praise one's own charity it becomes ineffective. Ubayathomukhi dhanam is classed highest among Dhanams i. e. when a cow delivers a calf and before the calf falls out of the cow, there are two faces looking up and so it is called ubayathomukhi. To give the dhanam at that time to a deserving person confers upon the giver the benefit of living in heaven for as many yugas as there are hairs on the bodies of the cow and the calf. The cow with black udder, horse, gingili, elephant, cart (ratha),

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dasi, house, virgin, gold, ruby Ratna - the giving of these ten is called Mahadanam.

Among the danams, giving of food (Anna Dhanam) is described as very good. Imparting of education or knowledge is superior to giving of cow, land or book; even here the imparting of knowledge of the self (Brahma Vidya) is most superior. One who gives it, obtains heaven and liberation.

All danams should be given without the reciplent desiring it; but food, education and virgin - these three should be given only to those who seek them. The merit of a dhanam does not depend on the nature or value of the gift; if given with sradda and bhakti it is meritorious even if of little value. Giving to parents, sisters and relatives are considered good. Two dangers attend hard earned money; they are giving to undeserving persons and not giving to deserving persons Persons respected taaditionally in a family should not be ignored and new persons respected.

Agriculture

Earning one's livelihood by ploughing the land and raising crops is called krishi (Agriculture) For doing so, there are certain rules. Bullocks which are hungry, thirsty, tired, lame or diseased or which are neither male nor female should not be employed for ploughing. The use of eight bullocks for ploughing is most proper, the use of six, four and two bullocks come next in order

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Persons earning their livelihood by krishi should perform a sacrifice called "Khalayagna" in order to save themselves from the sin of cutting trees, breaking the ground, and killing worms and insects. Giving one sixth to the king, one twentieth to the Devas, and one thirtieth to Brahmins who perform their religious rites is called 'Khalayagna'.

Protecting the country

A king who punishes the offenders against Dharma and who protects the followers of Dharma attains what he desires and goes to heaven.

Even as Devendran showers rain, so should the king fulfil the aspirations of his subjects. Even as the sun sucks water, in summer so should the king collect taxes; even as Vayu (Air) permeates all places, so should the king see the whole country with his aides. He should mete out punishment like Yama (God of Death) to one and all without considering whether the offender is his favourite or other wise; he should catch and penalise the sinner even as varuna binds living beings with the pasa rope. People should enjoy the sight of the king even as they do when they see the Moon, Those who offend the law should fear him even as one fears the heat of fire. Like Earth he should bear and protect his subjects with patience. A king with the above qualities is to be treated as equal to gods (Devas). It is said that if the king is sleeping and inactive, it is Kaliyuga; if he is awake it is Dwapara yuga; if he engages in action it is Threthayuga; if his action conforms to the Dharmic

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path, it is Krutha yuga. Therefore the Yuga is changed by the inaction or action of the king.

King's Dharma

If a country has no king its people cannot carry on their own activities because of fear and lack of peace of mind. Tne Almighty brings forth the king to protect all; hence the king should not be disrespected eventhough he may be young but he should rather be considered as the embodiment of our protecting God or angel (Deva). The King should protect his subjects in accordance with the needs of the place and time. Law breakers should be punished; only by the fear of such punishment, people can live happily. The king who administers punishment should by control of the mind and the senses be free from the ten defects arising from the emotion of love, and the eight defects arising from that of anger. Hunting of animals, Gambling, sleeping in daytime, telling others sins, too much indulgence with women, intoxication by drinks excessive absorption in music, dance, sound of instruments, wandering without purpose - these spring from love or desire (Kama).

Revealing the acts of another without knowing whether there has been any transgresson, troubling innocent persons intolerance of the qualities of others, speaking out the defects in others, earning by wrongful means, threatening and beating the guiltless - these spring from the emotion of anger.

Wealth should be acquired by proper means; the wealth thus acquired should be preserved with care and

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effort, increased along the right path and given to deserving persons.

A king who rules the country in the proper manner gets one sixth of the people's punyam (good deeds); protecting the people according to well ordained law is the most beneficial among Danams (acts of charity). A king who misrules and does not protect his subjects gets one half of their sins. After collecting the taxes properly if the king failed to protect them, he gets a half share in their sins.

He should appoint qualified persons to appropriate positions. In each city he should collect taxes by appointing one who is intelligent, capable descended from a noble family, and respected by the citizens, as the authority for that city.

As the person who makes garlands plucks flowers from the plants without harming them, taxes should be collected without causing any harm, Wherever good people suffer from hunger in a country, that country will soon perish.

A king should be affectionate to his subjects, and should cause fear towards his enemies. By punishing those who are not guilty and allowing offenders to go without punishment, a king loses his fame and goes to hell. The good deeds (Dharmic acts) of people protected by an able king confer on him long life, and prosperity of his kingdom If a king conquers another country, he should protect the people of that country according to their own customs and tradition and should not change them.

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Begetting Children

For anything to attain virtue or bad quality, place, time and operative condition are important factors. So too, obtaining good progeny depends on the qualities and habits of the father and mother. The children born of parents who take pure food and who lead a disciplined and good life will be of good disposition and character.

Time : From the appearance of mensus till the 16th day, women are capable of becoming pregnant. The first four days, 11th day, 13th day, Amavasya (New Moon), Poornima (Full Moon), Ekadasi, the first day of a month, the day of the birth star (Janma Nakshatram) etc. ought to be avoided. From the day of mensus (and avoiding the above days) impregnation, will be of a male if it happens on even number days and of a female if it happens on odd number days.

Acts to be performed upon the birth of children

The father should take bath as soon as the child is born even if the delivery is during night. Before the umbilical cord is cut, the child should be fed with honey mixed in ghee and traces gold. Paddy, gold, cloth, cow and ghee may be given as danam (charity) immediately on the birth of a child, the gods (Devas) and forefathers (Pitrus) are said to come to the house of the child's parents and so it is an auspicious time to give the danams (in charity) which amounts to worshipping them. The giving of charity (Danam) and taking bath

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on occasions like the birth of a child, an eclipse, a marriage, the beginning of a month, going on pilgrimage, at the thrashing floor and on death may be performed, even if it be night and if performed, they confer permanent benefit.

Naming of child

On the 11th day after birth or on the next day the child should be named after the family deity or forefathers etc. If it is a male child, the name should consist of two, four or six or other even nember of letters and if female, it should consist of three, five, or other odd number of letters. It is necessary to have the ears bored before the child strikes its first tooth. A person who performs the rites for Devas or pitrus must wear ornaments in his ear.

In the 6th month the child be fed for the first time with cooked rice. This ceremoney known as Annaprasanam should be preformed after worshipping the Ishta devata (One's own deity) and the Kula devata (family deity). It has to be according to the family custom and tradition- The child should be bathed and seated in its mother's lap and fed.

In the third year of the child the tuft forming ceremoney known as Chowla is performed. It is to be done according to the family tradition. For the performance of Deiva (God's) and Pitru (Forefather's) rites, one shoud have a tied up tuft; hence the necessity of this ceremoney from where the tuft begins to grow.

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Beginning to learn the letters
(Aksharabhyasam)

In the 5th year of the child during uttarayanam (from the middle of January to middle of July) it (the child) should be taught the alphabets. On that occasion, Lord Vishnu, Sri Lakshmi, Sri Saraswathi, and the presiding deity of knowledge (Vidyadishtana Devata) should be worshipped and homam (fire worships) with ghee performed. The child should be seated facing west and the teacher (Guru) facing east.

It is said no blemish will attach to the child till its 8th year even if it eats what should not be eaten, if it speaks falsehood or becomes otherwise impure.

Adoption of Son

The son born through one's wife is known as Aurasa son. If one has no such son, a son should be adopted and such adoption is necessary in order to continue the line. The adoption of a brother's son is proper. In the absence of such son, a son of a Dayadhi (relation connected thro' males alone) or in his absence, a male child born in the same gotra (as that of the adoptive father), or in his absence, one born in the gotra's of one's mother or if such were not available, one born in a different gothra may be taken in adoption. If the adoption is according to the rules prescribed therefor, the adopted child becomes the son of the adoptive Parents. There are other kinds of sons mentioned, than the one taken in adoption. They are not to be accepted in the Kaliyuga.

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Respecting Mother, Father and Guru

The service rendered with respect to the mother, the father and the Guru (teacher) is the highest dharma. These three are the 3 worlds, the three orders (Asrama), the three vedas, and the three fires (Agnis); and one who renders respectful service to them attains the three worlds.

Others who ought to be respected are: a person rich a person with large number of relations, an elderly person a person observing the daily religious duties with regularity and discipline and a person endowed with knowledge.

The elder brother is in the position of the father and should be respected. Disrespect to him leads one to hell. To a woman the husband is her guru; devotion and service to him lead her to heaven.

Pratiakshina Namaskara

One should bow to elders; failure to do this is said to curtail one's life period (ayus)

Other persons who are entitled to pranam (Namaskaram) are the teacher, uncle (paternal and maternal), the elder brother, their wives, respectable and elderly persons and their wives the mother's sister, father's sister, father-in-law and mother-in-law. If elderly persons are together in one place, the pranams should be made to the eldest person first and to others in the order of their age.

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The peepul tree, the cow, the married woman, (Suvasini) the temple and junction of roads; these should be over taken in the clock-wise manner. In case of urgency, this should be done atleast mentally.

The person to whom pranam is made should bless the person doing it, failure to do this is a great sin.

While doing circumambulation (prathakshinam), in auspicious functions elderly people and males should precede the younger people and the female respectively. Inauspicious functions, women should not go before man.

Duties of Student

The student should bow before elders everyday, so doing he obtains longevity, wisdom, fame and health.

It is not good to utter the name of the following persons: the Guru, his wife and son; one who has performed Yaga (Yagyam), the mother, the father, the uncle, one's ownself, one's wife, the eldest child other elders and a miser.

The teacher should be respected. The studen should avoid gambling, visiting dramas and moving with girls; he should also avoid excess of sleep and being idle. He should not speak ill of his teacher or listen to persons speaking ill of his teacher, Service to the teacher is very important. A student, who observes these is greatly benefited.

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Marriage

The word "Vivaha" literally means taking home the bride according to the sastras. The actual form of marriage depends on custom. A marriage which is not in accordance with the custom is not valid. A marriage should be celebrated in the presence of elders, wise and experienced persons. It is said that the saptharishis officiated at the marriage of Parvathi, the sage Viswamitra at the marriage of Sita and that a great and learned Brahmin brought about the marriage of Rukmani. Even today the marriage invitation refers to the marriage being settled by elders.

Panigrahanam is the sanskrit term for marriage. Pani means the hand and Grahanam is holding it. It is said that while holding the bride's hand, if the thumb is left out, female children will be born of the marriage; if the thumb alone is held leaving out the other fingers, only male children will be born and if all the fingers are held together, male and female children will be born and the family life will be happy. A good bridegroom should marry a healthy and beautiful bride from a respectable family.

One should not marry a girl from a closely related family or a girl who has married before. The bride should be three or five years younger to the bridegroom.

A girl should not select as her husband, a man who is insane or who is suffering from leprosy, who is a Napumsaka (who is neither male or female) or who is a close relative or who is deaf or dumb.

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It is the duty of elders to see that the girls in their families are married to suitable boys, The right to give the daughter in marriage is that of her father. In his absence, the following persons inorder, namely; father's father, the brother, a male member of the family, the mother, the mother's father, the maternal uncle, or a Bandhu (relative). A marriage performed in the prescribed manner is a sacrament. On no account, a marriage duly performed can be dissolved.

Choosing the suitable bride

The following method is specified for selecting suitable bride.

Paddy or other grains, a clod of earth from the sacrificial ground, a clod of earth from the field, the cowdung and a clod of earth from the greveyard, are to be put in five different vessels and covered. The prospective bride is asked to take one vessel out. If she takes one of the first four, the marriage would prove happy. If she takes the last vessel the marriage should be avoided.

A marriage which is settled with the free consent of both the parties should be celebrated at an auspicious hour and lagna on an auspicious day. Marriage between the following persons is prohibited. Marriage of one's son with the sister of one's son-in-law, marriage of the sisters to the same person, marriage of two sisters of one family to the brothers of another family. The eldest son or the daughter of the family should not be married in the month of Ani (Middle of June to July)

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Chastity of woman

A married woman is called a Pathni, Dharmapathni, Pathivratha, Suvasini etc. It is said that she acquires on marriage a divine power and that therefore she should be respected. Even today, married women are worshipped on occassions like Navarathri. This is a unique feature of Hindu religion.

The word Pathni means one who is eligible to participate in religious functions. Hence the married woman is also known as "Dharma Pathni".

Pathivrithyam (Chastity) is the highest Dharma of a married woman. It means, regarding the husband as god and assisting and enabling him to perform religious functions in the prescribed manner. She should also adopt his fasts. The family life with an ideal wife is happy; minor difficulties and differences of opinion are not allowed to be taken to the notice of or to bother the husband. She brings up the children in the family in the proper way and looks after the daily household duties carefully and well.

Duty of Chaste woman

Failure to treat the woman with great care generally and train her specially in important matters is likely to lead the families of both the woman and the husband into difficulties. She is not to be treated as a prisoner in the home.

Among the duties of an ideal married woman are, to be kind and to respect the parents and the brother of her

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husband, to impart faith in religion and in God; to the children of the family; to keep the house and the surroundings neat and clean. It is said that Goddess Lakshmi resides in a well kept house. She should attend personally to the needs and requirements of her husband and enable him to perform his religious duties. She is also expected to avoid waste and run the family economically.

Things she should avoid

Apart from the religious worship in which she joins her husband she need not have any independent worship; if necessary, she may do so with her husband's permission.

A woman is supposed to be always under the care and protection of male relatives i.e. of the father as a girl, of the husband as a young woman and of the sons or brother's as an elderly woman. She is to respect her husband even if he is poor or illmannered. A woman without the husband is like a musical instrument without the chord or a wheel without the axle. A married woman does not go out of the house or speak to other males except when necessary. When the husband is away or out of town she should avoid using attractive dresses or wearing too many ornaments or attending public places of entertainment.

A married woman keeps her body and mind pure; she wears sufforn Kum Kum and keeps her hair combed and plaited. She wears the usual ornaments on the ears and nose. She worships the sun in the early morning and elders. These are conducive to the longevity of her husband.

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A pregnant woman should be careful about her food. She should not do hard work or resort to physical exercises. She should avoid excess of laughter.

A woman may worship the goddess in the form of a picture or idol, in the morning and evening, or she may worship the lighted lamp.

A married woman who leads the life inaccordance with the Sastras is considered as Goddess Parvathi and even said to be responsible for seasonal rains.

Monthly Periods

During the monthly period a woman should observe the following restrictions for 3 days.

She should not have her bath or use oil for hair. She should not partake in the duties of the household. Failure to observe these restrictions will result in her children being born with defects, physical or mental, or with disease.

Unmarried girls should worship the Goddess in the morning and evening and repeat the strothras.

Woman surviving the husband.

A woman whose husband is no more should live with or be under the care of her father, mother, son, brother or parents-in-law.

She should have only one meal a day and wear white dress and observe fast on fast days. She should worship her departed husband daily. She may also do Japas after

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due initiation. She should lead a modest life and cultivate virtues like patience, truth, Ahimsa etc.

Duties of a Grahastha

A grahastha is a married man. A family man shouid receive persons coming to his house with warm heart and kind words and help him as far as he can. The guest should be treated kindly and given food and water. A family man should avoid telling lies, cheating, gambling and going to public entertainments too often. Giving charity to poor people, orphans and learned people and to the Guru etc., will bring good to him. One should not give away in charity the property which does not belong to him or which is entrusted to his care or which is the property of his wife.

A true grahastha is of help to everyone even as a mother is to her child.

Personal qualities

Males and females, young and old all should cultivate the following traits:

Daya (to be compassionate to those who are in trouble), Shanth (to be calm and not to retort even if one is spoken ill of or beaten) Anasuya (not to be jealous towards persons who are superior in worldly attainments), Soucham (keeping the body pure, using earth and water and the mind pure with good qualities), Anayasam, Mangalam (avoiding things which are beyond our power even if they are good), Akarpanyam (daily giving charity

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however small without grudging). Aspraha (being content with what one has and not to covet others property) Sathyam (to speak the truth as one sees or knows it) and Ahimsa (not to harm others on any account)

Other rules of conduct

One should always keep oneself neat and clean. One who can afford it should avoid using torn clothes or clothes belonging to others. One should not grow one's hair on the head without justification. Fire and water should not be carried at the same time in both the hands nor should water and cooked rice.

Some Nitya and Nymithika sradhas are said to bring some benefit as well. For that reason they should not be considered Kamya. The eighth day of the fortnight following the new moon in the month of Thai (Middle of January to Middle of February) is called Ashtaka and it is necessary to perform Sradha on that day. Also it is said that sradha should be performed on some occasions such as when one sees things which used to please the departed soul or at sight of good and learned Brahmins. A widow who has no sons should perform the Sradha for her husband.

Place of performance of sradha

Sradha is to be perfomed in a place which is purified by cowdung, and which is not in public view. If the sradha is performed in a place belonging to another, rent should be paid for that place. Sradha can however be performed in a common place like forest or the banks of river.

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Shannavadhi Sradha

The sastras mentioned that a person should perform 96 sradhas in a year. They include 12-Amavasya days (New Moon days) Yuhadi-4, Manvathi-14, Firstday of a month-12, Vaidruthi-13, Vyathi patha-13, Mahalaya-16, Ashtaka-12.

When suitable brahmins are not available to perform the sradha it is said that the preparations should be, put in the fire or water or given to the cow. If the sradha could not be performed on the particular day, it may be performed on Amavasya day or on the 11th day of the dark fortnight. Sradha which falls to be performed during pollution should be performed on the day, when he is free from pollution. Divided brothers should perform sradha for their ancestors separately. Even when they have to perform the sradha at one place, the preparations should be separate. In the case of undivided brothers living jointly, the eldest alone need perform the sradha. If however they are living separately, each one should perform in his respective place.

Gaya Sradha

It is the duty of the son to perform the sradha for his departed parents. It is very important, that once at leas, it should be performed at Gaya. A Gaya sradha is said to do good to the ancestors for several generations, ancestors to whom funeral rites had not been performed, or those who had left no male issue, or those who lost their lives at a time and place not known to their relatives. All these are benefited by the Gaya sradha and

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also all deceased persons on the mother's side, on the wife's side those of friends and relatives are pleased by such sradha.

At Gaya the sradha is performed in three different places namely at the bank of the Palguni, Vishnu Padam and Akshayavadam. Those who can afford should perform sradha at 48 different places at Gaya. (For futher details refer "Bharatha Sthalayatra" of the same Publisher).

Failure to perform sradha as mentioned above incurs the displeasure of ancestors and will result in difficulties. If it is performed in the proper manner with faith, one gets longevity, gains wisdom, wealth, a good family and other wordly benefits.

Does food offered to ancestors reach them?

On the death of a person, he is born again as a Deva or a man or some animal or other being, according to his Karma. The food offered to him by his descendents will be converted into food appropriate to the life which he has taken on his death. The mantras uttered during sradha have the power to do this, even as a calf is able to find out its mother among a number of other cows.

Pollution

One who is under pollution is unfit to perform any religious function. He becomes free from this pollution by lapse of time or by a purifying bath or by both.

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After life is extinct from the body, the house, where the dead body is as well as the street is said to become impure till the dead body is removed out of the house. (this is by lapse of time). The period for which one has to observe pollution depends on the degree of his relationship with the deceased. In some cases, the pollution ceases on taking a bath; in other cases, it extends from a few hours to ten days. At the end of the period, a purifying bath is taken.

When information regarding pollution is received in the course of performance of a vridha, Yagna or a marriage or other auspicious function, the pollution is removed by a bath taken immediately. Also there is no pollution for a Brahmachari or a Sanyasi.

There is no pollution when the information is received after the commencement of Brajapatyam or Chantrayanam. Similarly there is no pollution if the information is received after the performance of Nandhi, before the marriage or after the invocation of the Rithvik in a yanga or after the sangalpa in the sradha; these can be proceeded with, after taking a bath.

If a solar or lunar eclipse occurs during pollution, the ceremonies connected with the eclipse can be performed; pollution is no bar for this purpose.

If a female child is born in the family, the following relations of the child should observe pollution for ten days namely: the father, the brother, father's brother, father's brother's son, father's father and his brother.

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The period for which the pollution should be observed varies with the relationship of the person.

The pollution should be observed as under :

Age of deceased person	*No. of days for which pollution to be observed*
Upto 6 months old	To take bath only
Between 6 months and 3 years	One day
Between 3 years till upanayanam	Three days
After upanayanam	Ten days

In the event of delivery by a female member parents and brothers of such woman will observe pollution for 3 days. After three days the house gets purified. All ceremonies can be performed.

After adoption, if any son is born, the ceremonies of parents should be performed by own son and not by adopted son.

If the husband is under pollution, the wife should observe it also. If the wife is under pollution the husband should observe the same only in the case of the father-in-law or the mother-in-law or the brother-in-law.

When a person is under pollution, if another for the same or lesser period arises, he is freed from both on the expiry of the first pollution. But a pollution arising by reason of a death will not be removed by pollution arising out of birth.

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To decide the exact date of birth, death or menses, 7½ hours from Sun-set will be considered as part of the same day, For example, if sun-set occurs at 6 in the evening, the period upto 1=30 in the night will be counted as previous day and thereafter it will become next day.

It is believed that any work commenced at an auspicious time ends successfully and that any work commenced at an inauspicious time ends otherwise.

Provisions are found for finding out the auspicious time. For this purpose, time is divided into what is called 'Rithu' (within a period of two months), the month, the fort-night, the week, the day, the night, the Muhurtha etc;

The year is calculated seperately on the basis of the movement of the sun and of the moon; and the twelve months of the year are calculated accordingly.

The solar months are called Mesham, Vrushabam, Mithunam, Karkatakam, Simham, Kanya, Thula, Virchikam, Dhanur, Makaram, Kumbam, Meenam (in sanskrit) and Chitrai, Vaikasi, Aani, Aadi, Aavani, Purattasi, Aypasi, Karthikai, Margazhi, Thai, Masi, Panguni (in Tamil).

The lunar months are Chaitram, Vaisakam, Jeyashtam, Aashadam, Sravanam, Badrapatham, Aaswinam, Karthikam, Margaseersham, Powsham, Magam, Palgunam.

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The festival, Sri Ramanavami, Sri Jayanthi, Navarathri, Sivarathri, etc; are based on the lunar months. The sradha (ceremonies) for deceased ancestors are determined mostly with reference to the solar months.

The twelve solar months are divided into Six Rithu's each of two months. They are respectively Vasantha, Greeshma, Varsha, Sarath Hemantha and Sisir.

The fortnight beginning with the day after the newmcon ending with full moon is bright fortnight or Sukla paksham. Similarly the fortnight commencing with the day after the fullmoon and ending with the new moon is Krishna Paksham or dark fortnight.

The period beginning from the firstday of sukla-paksha till the date of new moon is called "Chandra - Mana".

If Sun's entry does not occur in a Chandra - Mana, it is known as 'Mala-matham' (மல மாதம்) Adhi month.

Similarly if Sun's entry occurs twice within a 'chandra-Mana' it is known as 'Malamatham' (மல மாதம்) or Adhi month.

The half year from the month of Thai to the end of Aani is Utharayana and the period of six months from the month of Aadi to the end of Margazhi is Dakshinayinam.

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FESTIVALS CELEBRATED BY HINDUS OR HINDU FESTIVALS.

The (Pratami) first day after the New Moon in the month of Panguni (corresponding to the period from the Middle of March to middle of April) is the beginning of New Year, according to the lunar year. The first month is called Chaitram and on the first day of this month the festival known as yuhadi is celebrated. Brahma (the god of creation) began to create the world on this day. Therefore Pooja (worship) must be offered to him on that day. One who perform it would enjoy happiness throughout the year. Those who follow principally the Lunar year would perform also the Navagraha (nine planets) pooja and would read the panchangam.

Vasantha Navarathri

From this day the first day after the New Moon in the month of Panguni begining the festival of nine days of the spring season known as vasantha Navarathri as well as the Sri Rama Navami Utsavam. Vasantha Navarathri denotes the teaching of Truth by the supreme goddess (which is called Devi Geetha) to the Deva, by incarnating for that purpose during noon time on the (Navarathri) 9th day of Sukla Patsha in the month of Chaitram. So for the growth of real knowldge, pooja of the Mother Godess (sakthi) who is the source of all the knowledge and who took the incarnation for the specific purpose of imparting knowledge would confer immense benefit. During the same period of nine days the reciting of the Ramayana and pooja of Sri Rama will be very

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conducive to welfare as it marks the incarnation (Avataram) of Sri Rama.

From that day, free supply of water or buttermilk may be arranged. By arranging for such supyly, the forefather (pitrus) are pleased.

Sri Rama Navami

In the month of Chaitra on the ninth day after the new moon, Sri Rama was born. On that day pooja of Sri Ramachandramurthi is essential. Observing fast on that day, doing pooja with the imprint of Sri Rama on a goldens coin and donating the same to worthy person makes off great sins.

The birth of the month of Chithirai occuring about 15th April, marks the auspicious time known as Vishu Punyakalam. Bath and Charity and pleasing the forefathers (pitrus) on that day are considered essential. Those who follow the solar system perform Navagraha (nine planets) pooja and hear the reading of the panchangam in order to get the blessings for long life and good health.

Vaisakam

From the day after the New Moon in the month of Chithirai, begins the month of Vaisakam. During the whole of that month, taking bath daily in the morning and doing Vishnu Pooja in the Tulasi petals confers immense benefit and daily during that month giving of clothes, vessels for carrying water, umbralla along with food remove sins committed in thousand (previous) births.

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Akshaya Trithiyai

The Thithiyai (3rd day) after the New moon (Sukla Patsha) in the month of vaisaka is knewn as Akshaya Trithiyai. If it occurs with Rohini star and on a wednesday, it is a a special significance. It is known as Yuhadi Punyakalam. (Krudayuhadi) bath, worship of forefathers (pitrus) and Deva pooja are important. Giving of water and food in charity will give inexhaustable benefit.

On this day Parasurama was born. Vishnu pooja is of great value.

Srimad Acharya Jayanthi

On the fifth day (panchami) in the same Sukla Paksha (the fortnight after the New Moon in the month of Vaisaka) is the birthday of Sri Bhagavadpada Achariyal (Adi Sankara). The Great Acharya who demolished the many atheistic (Nasthika) creeds which where threatenning the survival of our ancient Hindu religion and who re-established it should be specially worshipped. At this time worship of Sri Ramanujacharya on the day of Thiruvadirai star and of Madhvacharya Vallabbacharya by those who are followers of their respective Acharyas on their birth days is very important. The Acharya reveals the supreme being and therefore the Acharya should be respected like God.

Narasimha Jayanthi

During the same fortnight (Sukla paksha of the Vaisaka) on the evening of the 14th day (Chaturdasi) is the birth (Avatar) of Lord Narasimha. One should fast

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on that day and perform Pooja to Sri Narasimha. By such pooj the grace of god and release from sins are obtained.

In the month of Ashada on the IIth day (Ekadasi) of the fortnight after the New Moon (Sukla Paksha), Lord Mahavishnu goes to sleep on the ocean of Milk (Tiruparkadal) and wakes up on the IIth day (Ekadasi) of the fortnight after the now moon (Sukla Paksha) in the month of Karthigai. Those two days (Ekadasi) are therefore called Sayana (Sleep) and Uttana (Awake) Ekadasis. Performance of auspicious rites (Subhakaryam) is not good, but this does not prevent what cannot be avoided.

The interval between these two days (Ekadasis) is called Chaturmasya and during the period worship of god with observance of discipline (Vratam) known as Chaturmasya Vratam, is beneficial. Giving up the use in food of vegetable in the month of Sravanam (which grow in that month) of curd in the month of Bhatrapada, of milk in Aswayuja and of black gram, beans and thuvarai and other dals is prescribed for the chaturmasya vratam.

The first 3 days in the month of Adi are polluted (Rajodosham) days for the big rivers (Mahanadis). (Mahanadis are those which start from mountains and go direct to the sea. During those 3 days bath in those rivers should not be taken. But bath in them may be taken if eclipse occurs. This pollution does not exist in the Ganges, Yamuna, Saraswathi and Narmada.

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In Sravana month, the day when Sravana star occurs is the birthday of Hayagriva (incarnation of god with the horse neck and head) Workship of Lord Hayagriva should be done on that day. In Sravana month on the 8th day (Ashatami) of the fortnight after the Full moon (Krishna paksha) is known as Janmashtami. If the star Rohini combines with it, it is khown as Sri Jayanthi, if Wednesday also combines, it is a very auspicious day. Lord Krishna was born on Ashtami: therefore the alove is called Janmashtami and His star, namely Rohini, combines with it, it is called Sri Jayanthi. On that day, one should fast and perform pooja in the night, and awake.

The 4th day (Chathurthi in the fortnight after the New moon (Sukla paksha) in the month of Bhatrapada is Vinayaka (The god who demolishes all obstacles in human endeavour) Chathurthi. Also known as Lord Ganesa, He must be workshipped on that day. As He severes all obstacles, He is also known as Vigneswara. If Sunday or Tuesday combines with Vinayaka Chathurthi, it is of special singnificance.

During this fortnight, in the first part of Sravanam star, the Avataram of God (incarnation) as Lord Vamana took place. On that day fasting and performing pooja to him should be undertaken. If on this day it is the 12th day (Dwadasi)' it is called Sravana Dwadasi, which is a rare day. In this fortnight on the 14th day (chaturdasi), the austerity (Vratam) known as Ananta Vratam and on the Full Moon day, the Umamaheswara Vratam should be observed.

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Mahalayam

The fortnight (Krishna Paksha) from the first day after the full moon in the month of Bhatrapada is known as the Mahalaya Paksha. Every day during this fortnight, rites to please the forefathers (Pitrus) should be performed. Those who are not able to do so, can perform the same on the day of the Bharni Star, Vyadeepadam, Ashatami (8th day Dwadasi (12th day), or at least on one day. If it was not possible to do the same during this fortnight, they may be perfomed on any day before the first day of the month of Karthigai. If they are not performed, the curse of the forefathers (Pitrus) may follow. We have even earlier referred to Mahalayam.

Navarathri

The first nine days after the New Moon (Suklaphsha) in the month of Avani are the holy Navarathris (Nine Nights) For all the nine days Mother Goddess in the form of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswathi should be worshipped. Daily girls between ages 2 and 10 should be given new clothes and ornaments and should be worshipped. Kumari, Thrimurthi, Kalyani, Rohini, Kali, Chandika, Sambavi, Durga, Subadra would be the preferable order of workship. The mantra is "Durge Durge Rakshini Swaha". Those who cannot do the pooja all the nine days can do it for 3 days or at least for one day.

On the 9th day the maha pooja should be performed with good things, each according to the capacity. By the performance of the Durga Lakshmi Saraswathi Pooja,

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the disappearance of the fear of enemies growth of wealth, and increase of learning are respectively obtained.

On the 10h day, known as Vijayadasami, Mother Goddess known as Vijaya should be worshipped. On the evening of that day, travel outside will bring victory. According to Devibhavatam, Sri Rama is said to have performed the above pooja to Mother Goddess before he started on His mission and He conquered Ravana and ascended the throne.

Deepavali

On deepavali day, oil path should be taken early in the morning.

At that time Goddess Lakshmi is present in oil and Ganga in water. Taking bath then gives the benefit of bath in the Ganges.

It also removes the suffering that one may undergo in the hell. The plant known as Nayuruvi with thornes should be turned round over the head and thrown off at the time of the bath. In the morning the rite to please Yama (Yama tharpanam) should be performed. The manthra therefore is 'Yamaya Namah tharpayami.....etc." The tharpanam should be with water and gingelly. It removes sins committed in one year.

Except on this day, taking oil bath in the morning or early morning is wrong. On the deepavali day wearing new clothes and putting on the caste marks on the fore-

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head, one should bow (Namaskaram) and pay respect to elders.

From that day for 3 days in the evening lamp with four faces may be lit and placed at the top portion of the house. Lakshmi pooja must be performed in the night.

Narakachaturdasi

The Asura (demon) called Narakasura was born to Mother Earth through Lord Adivarahamurthi. Lord Krishna killed this cruel Asura. Mother Earth prayed the Lord for the boon that all people should rejoice and celebrate by litting lamps on this occasion of the death of Her son, namely Narakasura. The boon having been granted, we all celebrate the same even to this day. Similar is said to have been granted also to Emperor Bali.

Yama Dwidiyai (2nd day from New Moon day)

The month after the Amavasya (New Moon) following) the Deepavali is described as Krithika Suddham. Daily throughout this month early morning bath and pooja of the Lord (Bhagavan) is of special merit.

The second day in this fortnight (Suklapaksha) after the above Amavasya is marked out for woman to invite their brothers to their homes for dinner and pray their respect by the giving of betel etc. The brothers in their turn should give presents and dress to their sisters for increased prosperity. By so doing, the longevity of the

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women's married status (Sowmangalyam) and of the brothers is obtained.

On the day of Skanda Shasti, Lord Murugan should be worshipped.

Uttana Dwadasi

On the Suklapaksha Dwadasi (12th day after the New Moon) special pooja should be performed to the Lord and by uttering the mantras the Lord should be awakened. He sleeps from the month of Ashada and wakes up this day, called Uttana Dwadasi. Giving of Payasam on this day as charity is of special merit. With this the chaturmasya varatam comes to an end.

On this dwadasi, in the evening pooja to the plant known as Tulasi should be performed and marriage of Tulasi with Sri Narayanan must be celebrated.

Karthigai Deepam

On the evening of Poornima (Full Moon) the festival of lights is to be celebrated. Ornamental lamps must be lit and creatures which are seeing the above light, attain salvation.

On this day Lord Muruga should be seen and worshipped. By so doing he attains wealth and learning in seven births.

In the month of Margali pooja should be perfomed early in the morning. The method and benefits of such pooja have already been described.

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Samba Shashti

On the 6th day (shasthi) of the fortnight following the New Moon (Sukla shasti) in the month of Margali, pooja of Lord Muruga in the prescribed manner is of great merit. It is the Shasthi of Lord Muruga (Skanda shasti) according to some sages.

The birth of the month of Thai marks Uttarayana Punyakalam. On that day, taking bath, doing rites for pleasing forefathers (Pitrus) and performing pooja to Sun God (Soorya) are necessary. Using the leaf of the new Manjal plant, pooja in usually performed with the image made of Manjal. The next day is the day of Mattu Pongal. On that day the cow and Devandran should be worshipped.

The day after the Amavasya (New Moon) in the month of Thai marks the begining of the Magha month. Bath at sunrise is prescribed during this month. Giving in charity then is of special value. On the seventh day falls Ratha Sapthami and it is Manvadi Punyakalam (auspicious time for performing Pitru Tharpanam). On that day, seven leaves of the Erukku plant with rice (Akshathai) grass (Arugam grass) and cow dung should be placed on the head and bath taken with mantra.

Bhishmashtami

The day after rathasapthami comes bhishmashtami. On the morning of that day, after bath the rite (Tharpanam) to please Bhishma should be performed by all including those who have their father and mother living.

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By this, sins of one year are washed off. The tharpanam should be performed with rice. (Akshatha).

Ashtakai

On the 8th day of the fortnight following the Full Moon (Krishna Paksha) in the month of Magha performance of rites each according to his capacity to please forefathers (Pitrus) is very essential. Those who are not able to perform Sradha (Ceremony) can give in charity water vessel (Jalapatra) by which the pitrus are pleased.

Sivarathri

On the night of Magha Krishna paksha chaturdasi (the 14th day of the fortnight following the full Moon in the month of Magha) the auspicious time known as Sivarathri falls to be observed. On that night at or about the 15th Naligal (midnight) Lord Parameswara appeared in Linga form. Fasting on that day, keeping awake on that night and Siva Pooja with earth confer its own benefit. Those who cannot perform all the three can observe at least one or two of them. The austerity (Vratam) on this occasion is Nitya (essential) and it confers boons equal to performance of Aswameda Yagam.

The meeting periot of time between the end of the month of Masi and the begining of the month of Panguni is intended for married woman (Sumangalis) to tie in their necks the holy thread (Manjal saradu) which is to be done before the birth of Panguni and which is very

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essential. At this time performance of pooja to Goddess Gowri (Sampath Gowri) and the tying up of the holy thread is of special merit.

Further performance of Mangala Gowri Vratam, pooja in the lamps lit with ghee on the four tuesdays of the month of Sravanam in the prescribed manner, and completion of the same after such performance for five consequitive years confer long married life (Sowmangalyam) on women.

Sankatahara Chaturthi

Pooja with fasting on the 4th day (Chaturthi) of the Krishna Paksha (fortnight following the Full Moon) offered to Lord Ganesa in the prescribed manner at moon rise will enable one to get over insurmountable dangers.

Ardhodaya Mahodaya Punyakalam

In the month of Magha, if at sunrise on a Sunday, the later half of Vyadeeyapadayogam, the first half of Amavasya and the middle of Tiruvonam star are formed to occur in combination, that time is known as Ardodayam. If these combine on a Manday it is called Mahodayam. On this occasion, bath, charity and rites to please the forefathers (Pitrus) are very essential.

There are four Navarathri (Nine) days festivels in a year. 1. Vasantha Navarathri, 2. Ashada Navarathri (the nine days after the Amavasya in the month of Ani), 3. Sarada Navarathri (in the month of Purattasi), 4. Magha Navarathri (the nine days after the Amavasya

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in the month of Thai) worship of Mother goddess (Ambal) during the four Navarathri with Kanya Pooja and Suvasini Pooja will confer on the family long life health and wealth.

Pathisanjivana Vratam

The pooja performed by married women on Lord Parameswara in litted lamp for their husband's long life, health and wealth is known as Pathisanjivana vratham. Even unmarried girls can also perform the above to get good husband. It is better to perform the pooja on Full Moon day and on New Moon day.

Thus the many auspicious occasions (Punyakalas) austerities (Vratams) occur according to the place and tradition of each family. They are to be observed in the manner followed traditionally by the family. It is very essential in this way to worship the deities of One's family and caste. Those who observe the above festivals according to rules and customs with faith will derive for themselves and their descendants the benefit of long life, health and riches.

ASTROLOGY

We sometimes achieves big things with small effort; at other times we are not able to achieve even small things with great effort. We then attribute our failure to the time being against us. Therefore it is clear that for all efforts time is an important factor.

Time changes with the movements of the Sun, the Moon and other planets and the Stars. The two Naligais

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(நாழிகை), Naligai is a measure of time and each Naligai is equal to 24 minutes after the sun rise is known as one Muhurtham (முஹூர்த்தம்), 15 Muhurthams make the day, and another 15 the night. Depending on the increase of the Moon for the fortnight before full Moon, the Prathamai (பிரதமை), Dwithiyai (த்விதியை), the following thithis (திதி) occur and they make the fortnight known as Suklapaksha (சுக்லபக்ஷம்) and correspondingly the decrease of the Moon (for the fortnight before the New Moon) marks the Krishna Paksha. (கிருஷ்ண பக்ஷம்). The movement of the sun from Mesha Rasi to other Rasis is taken to denote the months of Mesha, Vrishaba (சித்திரை, வைகாசி etc.). The Moon stays in each Rasi for 2¼ stars. For the stars Aswini, Barani, ¼ part of Krithika, the Moon stays in Mesha Rasi. Likewise Virshabha and other rasis occur. When the Moon comes round the 12 Rasis, all the 27 stars one completed. This from the moments of heavenly lights (Jothis) like the sun the good and bad times are revealed by the Jyothisha Sastra (Arthology). This Sastra is a very elabrate Sastra. It consists of 3 branches the ganitha branch (Ganitha Skandam), the Jataka Branch. (Jataka Skandam) and the prasha branch (Prasna Skandam). The part which deals with the stars and movements of the planets is known as the Ganitha branch; the part which reveals the efferts of their several movements, several halt. (Vision) and vision is known as the Jataka Branch; the part which enables the discovery of lost things, the idea in the mind as known as the Prasna branch. Here some of the important portion in them related. For any work, selecting

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the proper Tithi, day of the week, star and Lagnam (லக்னம்) and doing the same at such proper time is bound to be on the desired fruit.

However it is rarely if even, that these Thithi, star etc.; are all good on any single occassion. One should therefore try to continue as many good points with as little inauspicious (Or bad) points regarding the above (Thithi, stat etc.) for doing any work. There is any authority for the above proposition in Kalaprakasika.

Marriage

Counting from the star of the bride upto the star on the day of marriage, if it is 2-4-6 8-9, it is auspicious. The 2nd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 11th & 13th thithis (திதிகள்) that the days in which these thithis occur, Rohini, Margaseersha, Magha, Hastham, uttiram, uthirathadi, Swathi, Revathi, Anusha, Sathayam & Moola stars, Mithuna, Kanya, Thula and the latter part of Danus lagnas are worthy of being choosed for the occasion of marriage. The Seventh place should be clean. In Krishna paksha, the days after Ashtami (th 8th) are not good. For the rites like Rithu santhi and grahapravesam also the suitability of the bride's star should be examined with reference to the day to be fixed for such rites.

Travel (Yatra)

If the star at the time of travel is the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, or 9th from the star of the traveller, it is auspicious. The 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th 11th & 13th thithis (திதிகள்) Aswini, Margasirsha, Pushyam, Hastham, Anuradha,

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Avittam, Sravanam and Revathi stars, Vrishabha, Simha, Kataka, Thula and Danus lagnas (லக்னங்கள்) are highly preferable. The 5th place should be clear. If the Moon is in the 8th Rasi from the person's (Traveller's) rasi, travel should not be undertaken for the 2¼ stars for which the Moon is in that 8th rasi. This is called chandrashtamam. (Moon in the 8th place).

Going towards the east (eastern direction) on Mondays and Saturdays, the north on Tuesdays and Wednesdays the south on Thursdays, the west on Fridays and Sundays should be avoided as these are known as soolam in the respective days. If travel could not be avoided on the said days in the prohibited direction, commencing the journey after the 8th naligai (நாழிகை) on Mondays and Saturdays, after the 12th naligai (நாழிகை) on Tuesdays and Wednesday, after the 22nd naligai (நாழிகை) on Thursdays and after the 15th Naligai நாழி கை) on Fridays and Sunday may be undertaken.

From the 1st thithi (ப்ரதமை) to the 10th thithi (தசமி) in the sukla paksha the yogini (யோகினி) is repectively on the East, North, South East, South West, West, North West, North East, the sky and Earth. And from the 11th thithi Ekadasi (ஏகாதசி) to the krishna paksha 5th thithi Panchami (பஞ்சமி) the yogini is on the ten directions as noted above; and again from the 6th thithi (ஷஷ்டி) to the New moon (அமாவாஸ்யை) in the krishna paksha, the yogini is again on the 10 directions as noted above. On the thithi of setting out on the journey, if the yogini is behind or on the right side it is good; if it is in front or on the left side, it is bad; if it

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is on the sky or on the earth, it is medium (neither good nor bad). Going in the direction of the East on Tuesdays, the south on Saturdays and Mondays, on the west on Wednesdays and Thursdays, on the North on Fridays and Sundays will give the expected result of such travel. The propitiions contination of thithi, star, days of the week, lagnam, soolam, and yogini in the manner stated above is very rare. Therefore one should prostate and pray the Almighty who is in the Soorya Mandalam (the central area of the Sun) and should pray the Ishta Devatha (Personal God) and worship Brahmins, astrologers, Gurukkal and offer them fruits betals and money (தக்ஷிணை) and pay obeisance to them before starting on the journey which will make it fruitful.

Good Omen (சகுனம்)

The following are good indications when they are meet with while starting to go for any place: sumangali (married woman be whose husband is living), girl who has not attained puberty, two Brahmins, cow Flower, curd, Fire, Poornakumbha, sandal paste, grain, dead body, elephant, horse, bull, milk and ghee. It is also a good sign to hear the sound of counch, veena and bell and words like 'go, victory, leave, leave off, get up, go out, be confortable and so on.

Bad Omen (அப சகுனம்)

It is bad omen to meet the following: Man with jadai (heavy and matted hair) man with uncombed hair, man smeared with oil, sanyasin (ascetic), red flower, butter milk, salt, man with wet clothes, serpent, hare,

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cat, so also to hear words like 'come' voice of weeping or quarrelling, sneezing. One should not go if a single Brahmin is met with at the time of starting, meeting a single non-Brahmin is good but more than one non-Brahmin is not good.

Auspicious time for souring

The time of souring should preferably have Robini, pushyam, sravanam, sadayam, swathi, uthiram, uthiradam, uthirathadhi, Moolam, Anuradha, Hastham, Magha, Revathi and Punarvasu and the thithis (திதிகள்) mentioned for travel, vrishabha, Simha, Mithuna, Kataka-Thula, Makara, Kumbha, Meena lagnas; the 8th place, should be clear. The yogini on the sky and earth should be avoided. It is also necessary to see Rahu pani.

Beginning to build on a site

The 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 11th and 13 thithis (திதிகள்), Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Rohini, Margasirsha, Punarvasu -pusam, Uthira, Hastha, Swathi, Anuradha, Moolam, Uthirada, sravana, Avittam, Sadayam, Uthirattadi, Revathi stars, avoiding chara lagna and the lagna having 8th 12th place clean are preferable.

And for entering into a house the above thithis, stars, days of the week, and lagnas are good. The months of Ani, Purattasi, Margazi, panguni, the setting of guru and sukra are prohibited.

Trade

The above stated thithis, Asvini, Rohini, Margasirsha, Poosam, Uthiram, Uthiradam, Uthirattadi,

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Hastham, Chitra, Anuradha, Revathi stars, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Chara lagna, auspicious planet in the 10th place are good.

Mantra Upadesa

According to the chandramanam, the ruthus of Vaisakam, Sravanam, Aswayujam, Kartikam, Margasirsham, Maga, Uthiram, Uthiradam, Uthirattadi, Rohini, Pushyam, Swathi, Anuradha, Magha, Chitrai, Moolam, Punarvasu, Ardhra, Sravanam, Hastha and Revathi, charalagna or ubaya lagna (i.e both chara (Moving) sthira (unmoving) lagnas with the 8th place being clean are good. 8th, 9th, 14th thithis, Full moon and New moon, Tuesday and Saturday are not good. Chara (moving) lagna is good; Sthira (unmoving) lagna is not good. Mesha lagna is chara; vrishabha is sthira and Mithuna is both (i.e. both chara and sthira) in this order from kataka lagna.

"Panchakam"

Where a good lagna is to be fixed, it should be what is called 'Nishpanchakam'—that is when the Thithi, day of the week, the star and lagna are added up and divided by nine and if the remainder is 1, it is Mrithyu, if 2, Agni, if 4 Raja, if 6, chora, if 8 panchakam. If the remainder is either 3, or 5 or 7 or 9, it is auspicious and it is known as Nishpanchakam.

If it could not be avoided, giving in charity of Ratna for Mrithyu, Sandal for Agni, lemon for Raja, lamp for Chora and paddy for Roga may be performed and the work done.

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	Raghu Kalam	Gulikan	Yamakandam
Sunday	4½—6	3—4½	12—1½
Monday	7½—9	1½—3	10½—12
Tuesday	3—4½	12— ½	9—10½
Wednesday	12—1½	10½—12	7½—9
Thursday	1½—8	9—10½	6—7½
Friday	10½—12	7½—9	3—4½
Saturday	9—10½	6—7	1½—3

The above table is on the basis that the sunrise is at 6 a.m. If the sunrise is earlier or later, the time of the above should be calculated on the basis of the time of sunrise. 2½ naligais are one hour. These will occur during the day.

Good Dreams

Seeing while asleep (that is in dreams) the orbit of the sun and the moon and touching the same with hands and feet, trees bearing fruits, forest, mountain, sea, rivers and places having water, mother, father, relatives, woman (having husband living) persons adorned with white dress and flowers, young girl, cow, bull, deer, cock, gold, jewel, king, horses, chariot, temple, deity, brahmins wearing white clothes, vessel full with water and covered by coconut, (Poorna Kumba), couch, wheel, flag, is good and seeing and speaking in dreams with master (guru) person learned in Vedas, person who has done continuous worship, women are also good.

Bad Dreams

Seeing in dreams the sun and the moon dim with lack of light and shine, sea river or tank empty without

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water, star falling from the sky, wearing red garment and going in the southern direction, fat woman with thick matted hair, person smeared with oil, woman with reddish matted hair, pig, dog, cat, buffalo, camel, dirty imprinted on plain metal, dancing, laughing or weeping indicates the coming of evil. If one dreamt before dawn, the effect will be known in 12 days, if at sunrise the effect can be seen almost immediately.

In the night, variety of dreams will follow one another; that alone which comes later will bear effect. Therefore, if one should have bad dreams it is better to sleep again. If good dreams occur, one should not tell them to other; if bad, they may be related to others and after taking bath, lamp with ghee may be lit before the deity.

"Lagnas"

Each day consists of 60 naligais, In them 12 lagnas pass Mesha 4 1/4, Vrishabha 4 3/4, Mithuna 5 1/4, Kataka 5 1/2, Simha 5 1/4, Kanni 5, Thula 5, Virchhika 5.1/4, Danus 5 1/2, Makara 5 1/4, Kumbha 4 3/4, Meena 4 1/4 - altogether 60 naligais. Of this 6 lagnas pass during day and 6 during night.

Horai

One hour is one horai. On Thursday in the morning 6 to 7 is Guru Horai, 7 to 8 Sevvai, 8 to 9 Soorya Horai, 9 to 10 Sukra, 10 to 11 Budha, 11 to 12 Chandra 12 to 1 Sani, 1 to 2 again guru and so on. Thus seven horais are repeated thrice and with the last 3 horais one day is completed. In the 4th horai, the next day begins. The

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devata of the particular day of the week will be the starting horai. After the 24 hours of Thursday, on Friday the day will commence with Sukra horai. Doing things in Guru and Sukra horai is good, Sani and Sevvai are not good.

Navagraha Dasais (Periods)

The soorya dasai is 6 years, chandra dasai 10, Sevvai 7, Ragu 18, Guru 16, Sani 19, Buda 17, Kethu 7, Sukra 20 so the total of dasais is 120 years.

The Jyotisha sastra (astrology) is a part of Vedangas; it is said to be the eye of the Vedas. Some say it is the auxillary of the Rig Veda. Vedas mostly prescribe the sacred rites.

The performance of such rites when performed at the proper times yield good results; if they are not so performed they yield contrary results. Jyotisha sastra is the basis for knowing the proper time. Further it helps us to know the life span and the dasa and bhukti (planetary movements with their influence on life) so that propitiatory ceremonies where necessary could be performed. Therefore Jyotisha is to be learned well from a Guru (master). The things contained in this sastra mainly follow Kalaprakasika. It is very necessary to look into the panchangam (almanac) every morning and then know the thithi etc. Each day by knowing the thithi one's wealth grows, by the day of the week life, One's sins are decreased by knowing star on each day; cure of one's disease occurs by knowing the yoga and achievement of result by knowing the karana. Let every day these be known and good effects realised by all.

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Ayur Veda (Medical Science)

The Ayur Veda reveals the devices for obtaining long life, release from disease and a healthy life. Only with life can be achieved dharma, Artha, Earthly pleasures heavenly bliss and all. It is therefore very essential to learn Ayur Veda. This Veda was first mentally thought out by Brahma Deva and taught by him to Daksha Prajapathi and he in turn taught it to Aswini Devas and they to Indra, he to Atreya, Danvantari, Nimi, Kashyapa and other 8, they to the 6, namely Agni Vesya, Pela, Jatookarni, Parasara, Hareetha, Ksharapain. Each of these 6 has written separately the medical science. The disciple of Danvantry, namely Susruta wrote the treatise Susruta Samhita and that written by Charaka is called Charaka Samhita. Sri Vagphakar wrote by collecting the materials from the above treatises, his work known as Ashtanga Hirdayam and Ashtanga Sangraha. Arunadatta has written a commentary known as "Sarvangasundara" on Ashtanga Hirdaya. Some say Ayurveda is an auxiliary part of Rig Veda and others of Atarva Veda.

General Rules

One must get up early in the morning and pray God. Then one should do physical exercise according to one's condition and ability, clean the teeth by means of small sticks which have a bitter taste and then take bath. Bath in the morning confers strength and increases digestive power, life, vigour and energy, apart from removing dirt and laziness from the body. Bathing in hot water below the neck and in cold water above the neck is conducive to good health.

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One who desires long life should abandon the ten kinds of sins committed by the body, mouth and the mind; the sins committed by the body are causing harm to living being, theft, having sexual intercourse with women other than one's wife, those by the mouth are speaking ill of others behind their backs, speaking unfit and cruel things, and telling lies, those by the mind are thinking of harm to living beings, hate, and atheistic thoughts contrary to the sastras. One should have compassion towards the fellow beings and should be intolerant towards their sufferings.

Worshipping the Devas, the cow, Brahmins and elders being helpful to others, having steadiness of mind, in times of prosperity as well as danger, not disclosing one's humiliation, doing things which will be pleasing to others and conducting oneself with softness and elegance—all these are conducive to long life.

Food

After taking bath etc., and after one's parents, elders and children have taken their food, one should clean his hands and feet and begin to take food. The food taken at the previous meal should have been digested and one should feel the hunger before taking the food.

In spring season, increase of fleen is likely and so ghee and oil substances food which is hot and having a bitter, sour etc. taste. should be avoided, In summer air is affected and so ghee and other similar substances may be taken, salt, sour etc. should be reduced. In autumn because of rain the heat from earth will be coming up

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and matter will get muddy. During this season, sweety saltish and sour foods may be eaten in limited quantities. Water should be boiled for drinking. In winter because the nights are long, hunger in the morning will be great. Food which is hot may be taken at the appropriate time.

There are prescribed good medicines for all types of ailments like cold, cough, headache, phelgru, indigestion, piles, jaundice, constipation, whooping cough, fever, elephantiasis, diabetes, asthma, itches and sores caused by constant touch with water etc. The diagnosis of all these is also elaborately dealt with in the treatises of Ayurveda. The treatment of the same in the Tamil version of this book may usefully be looked into in this regard.

By the Creator, different kinds of people have been created for different types of work. Some are born to pray and worship gods. Observing austerities; others for protecting, the citizens and punishing offenders; still others are to engage in business. Those who engage in business must so conduct it as to receive only reasonable profit. When they carry on their avocation in this manner, they are rendering most useful service to the community.

Those who follow the divinely ordained path obtain His grace and thereby get their wishes fulfilled.

Thus, this work which has been undertaken with the blessings and in obedience to His merciful direction, is dedicated most humbly to the lotus feet of His Holiness Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Parama Acharyal.

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ERRATA

page	line	mistake	to be read as
6	3	bath	bathe
18	Last line	ha	has
24	16	Prohze	Bronze
37	10	Inauspicious	In auspicious
39	2	boy,	boys.
39	22	between	between
40	3	therefore	therefore
43	14	everyone even as	every one as (art even)
45	1	mentiond	mention
47	Last line	athers	fathers
53	4	ill is a	it has a
55	3	workship	worship
55	18 (2nd para 5th line)	worhshipped	worshipped
56	22	workship	worship
59	12	plan	plant
61	5th line from bottom	periot	period
63	7	pathisanjivana	pathisanjivana
64	20	elabrate	elaborate
64	26	effects	efferts
64	29	as known	is known
67	16 (2nd para 2nd line)	meet	met

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Sri Dharmajna M. Ramanatha Deekshithar

12th Scion of

Srimad APPAYYA DEEKSHITHAR